

POLITIAN

Politian is Poe's sole attempt to write a play for the stage, and indeed his only effort of any kind at a drama in verse.⁽¹⁾ His abandonment of it must have been deliberate, for while the play is unfinished, the conclusion was obviously planned; the play needed only a few lines to be completed.

Poe, indeed, seems never to have been happy about his play. It simply did not meet the high artistic standards he set for himself. He published five scenes in the *Southern Literary Messenger* in 1835-36 almost surely because the magazine needed copy, and his letter of September 10, 1845, to E. A. Duyckinck makes it clear that the scenes were republished in *The Raven and Other Poems* somewhat against the author's will and only "to fill a book." That he did not plan ever to print the other scenes of the play was implied when to George W. Eveleth, who had asked him about them, Poe laconically replied on December 15, 1846, "There is no more of 'Politian.' "

If Poe rightly concluded that his forte was not in the composition of dramas for the stage, he nevertheless preserved most of his manuscript. And today one may well wish to read the sole effort at a full-length play by the author of that masterly prose monodrama, "The Tell-Tale Heart." *Politian* never was finished, and some of what was written has been lost. But it is still almost complete, since the lost lines are demonstrably less than one hundred and the general plan of the final scene is obvious. It can be and indeed has been performed and found acceptable by audiences.⁽²⁾

Full discussion of the history of the parts Poe did not print belongs [page 242:] in the bibliographical and textual notes below. But it should be said at once that a major portion of the manuscript was preserved by Poe's patroness, Sarah Anna Lewis, who gave one leaf to an obscure collector, and the rest later to John H. Ingram.⁽³⁾ Ingram's portion entered the famous collection of Stephen H. Wakeman, bought *en bloc* by the first J. P. Morgan in 1909.

In 1917, when I was an undergraduate, Miss Belle da Costa Greene, director of the Pierpont Morgan Library, suggested that I edit the play; and in 1923 *Politian, An Unfinished Tragedy* was published at Richmond.⁽⁴⁾ This is the first edition, and as such is now followed for the conventional arrangement of speakers' names and stage directions. The text given below is based on very careful re-examination of the manuscript⁽⁵⁾ and of all the printings by Poe of parts of the play. The annotation has been brought up to date, and also reduced by the omission of some peripheral material.

SOURCES OF THE PLOT

Poe's source lies in the celebrated "Kentucky Tragedy," the killing of Colonel Solomon P. Sharp in 1825 by Jereboam O. Beauchamp.⁽⁶⁾ The grim story follows. Sharp, a politician, seduced a girl of good family, Ann Cook or Cooke. Their child died, and Sharp refused to marry his inamorata, who thereafter lived in retirement, much given to reading. Beauchamp, though much younger than she, became romantically interested in her, made her acquaintance, and sought her hand. She asked him to avenge her; and Beauchamp (who was also interested in politics) tried to challenge Sharp to a duel. The latter refused to fight because he was in the wrong. The lady now got what Beauchamp called a "true womanish whim" to be her own avenger, and practiced [page 243:] pistol shooting. In June 1824, Beauchamp and Ann Cook were married, and they decided to let the husband do the killing. He called Sharp to the door at "2 A. M. on the night of November 6" (the morning of the seventh), 1825, and stabbed him to death. Sharp had recently resigned the attorney generalship of the state to run for Congress from Franklin County.

It was a time of great political unrest in Kentucky, and Beauchamp was convicted, probably because the jury thought the crime had a political motive. His confession convinces me that it had not, but it should be recalled that Kentucky killings were rarely caused by quarrels about women. Beauchamp and his wife attempted suicide; she died, but the husband recovered and was hanged on July 7, 1826. They were buried in one grave at Bloomfield, Kentucky, with a monument on which is engraved the epitaph in verse composed by Mrs. Beauchamp.⁽⁷⁾

It is more than probable that Poe's attention was called to the case by an account of it in chapter xxxiv of Charles Fenno Hoffman's *Winter in the West*, where it was remarked: "Incidents like these ... seem from the ... romantic rashness they betray, as belonging to a bygone age ... All combine to make up a drama of real life which can never be forgotten ... where it was enacted." Hoffman's work bears the date 1835 on its title page, but it came out in time to be reviewed in the *New York American Monthly Magazine* for December 1834. From Hoffman's words Poe probably took the idea of *drama set in another age*. A brief notice of Hoffman's book in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, April 1835, is probably Poe's. It does not refer to Sharp and Beauchamp. There is reason to believe that Poe began work on his play early in 1835⁽⁸⁾ and did not spend many weeks on it, for on April 13 J. P. Kennedy wrote to T. W. White that Poe had been "at work upon a tragedy, but I have turned him to drudging upon whatever may make money."⁽⁹⁾ [page 244:]

The case had attracted great attention in the newspapers of 1825 and 1826 and has ever since been the subject of many factual works, stories, and songs. There is no evidence, however, that Poe used as sources anything beyond Hoffman's account and two of the pamphlets. *Politian* does reflect the author's familiarity with these publications. The pamphlets are: (1) *The Confession of Jereboam O. Beauchamp* ... (Bloomfield, Kentucky, 1826), which includes some poems by both Beauchamp and his wife; the authenticity of the work was brought out in testimony in a lawsuit against Beauchamp's uncle, and it is still our chief source of knowledge of the affair. (2) *Letters of Ann Cook, late Mrs. Beauchamp, to her Friend in Maryland* (Washington, 1826), published by one "W—— R—— n" of Charles County, Maryland, who said the letters were addressed to his wife Ellen; they are obviously authentic, and Poe seems to

echo some of their phraseology, in his seventh scene especially. He had no need to go back to the newspapers of the time of the murder and the trial. Nor can I think that he used any of the other factual pamphlets on the crime,⁽¹⁰⁾ or imaginative works based on it written before his own.⁽¹¹⁾

Of the many later treatments of the “Kentucky Tragedy,”⁽¹²⁾ Poe took notice of only two. Reviewing *Beauchampe*, by William Gilmore Simms, in *Graham’s* for May 1842, Poe said that the [page 245:] tragedy itself was romantic and thrilling, but he feared “too little has been left for invention.” Of the same book, Poe said in the *Broadway Journal* of October 4, 1845, “Historical truth has somewhat hampered ... the artist”; this was in a review of *The Wigwam and the Cabin* by Simms. More interesting is a comment on Charles Fenno Hoffman’s *Greyslaer* (1840) in Poe’s notice of Hoffman in *Godey’s* for October 1846: “The facts ... would put to shame the skill of the most consummate artist ... The incidents might be better woven into a tragedy.”

THE PRESENT TEXT

The text of Poe’s play is necessarily a composite, since the scenes that he printed include many lines no longer available in the now imperfect manuscript, which is our only source for the rest. The texts of scenes III, VI, VII, and IX here given are based on *The Raven and Other Poems* (1845); that of scene IV on the Lorimer Graham copy of that book as marked by Poe; and the rest on the manuscript in the Pierpont Morgan Library. The Trustees have kindly granted permission for its use in this edition. Poe himself twice saw through the press the parts he printed. The manuscript, however, is not in final form, but something just short of it. The author must have planned to go over it once again, or have expected his printers to give it finishing touches, as was customary at the time. On June 22, 1835, Poe wrote T. W. White that he would give more care to his punctuation in the future. The manuscript of *Politian* was written before that letter.

Poe never published the play as an entity and never decided finally on the division into acts. Therefore, as in the first edition of 1923, the scenes here are numbered from I to XI, and uniformity has been introduced by printing all speakers’ names in capital letters in full (whether Poe abbreviated them or not) and all stage directions in italics within *parentheses*.

Poe’s inconsistent spelling I have retained throughout when he used tolerated forms. The only word actually spelled incorrectly (“neice”) he checked, and it has been corrected. Poe usually wrote forms like “I’ve” with the apostrophe; on the rare occasions when it is surely or apparently omitted, I regard the omission as like a [page 246:] failure to dot an *i* or cross a *t*, and supply it. The few ampersands are expanded, as is “sh’d” in II, 35-36.

The punctuation of the scenes Poe printed is reproduced exactly. In the scenes from manuscript, periods are placed at the ends of some complete sentences where nothing can be seen. Commas, dashes, and periods, like semicolons and exclamation points, can sometimes only be distinguished by the context.

Editorial emendation for the scenes Poe printed consists of placing parentheses around some directions and supplying (in square brackets) the name of a speaker accidentally omitted at IV, 35. For the material from manuscript, certain emendations have been made in square brackets: In scene VIII two words are retained which were marked by Poe in pencil as unsatisfactory but for which he made no substitutions; stage directions and speakers’ names omitted or lost by imperfection of the original have been added; and the date of the action, about which the author made no final decision, has been assigned to the sixteenth century, as in the first edition of 1923.

TEXTS

Of the texts listed below, only *A* through *G* are authoritative. Texts *H* to *N* are merely first printings and first publications in books; they are of no independent authority, and all are inaccurate. Stovall’s text (*P*) is based on *A* and *B*. He divides the play into acts and presents the scenes in a new order, thus: Act First, my I, II, IV; Act Second, my III, V, VI; Act Third, my VII, IX; Act Fourth, my VIII, X, and XI. This he believes to have been the author’s plan. In view of the imperfect state of the admittedly unfinished manuscript, I have not felt justified in changing the order of the scenes therein, which is certainly that of composition. That scene IV comes after scene III seems to me confirmed by the order adopted by Poe in his volume of 1845. There is no reason to think (with Ingram) that any part of the play save the opening lines of scenes V and X has been lost. The last leaf of the manuscript (*A*), unlike the others, has writing only on the recto.

(*A*) Manuscript, 1835, originally written in ink on thirteen leaves of which ten are in the Pierpont Morgan Library, one (the last) is in the William H. Koester Collection at the University of Texas, and two (the fifth and eleventh), now are lost; all scenes are complete save IV, V, IX, and X. (*A2*) Changes in pencil on *A* (later than *B*), verbal only at VI, 63, and VIII, 3, 14, 41, and 55; a few italicizations elsewhere. (*B*) *Southern Literary Messenger*, December 1835 and January 1836 (2:13-16, 106-107), scenes IV, VI, VII, and III, IX; (*C*) *Broadway Journal*, March 29, 1845 (1:197), scene IV, lines 5-27 and 56-111, in Poe’s article, “Imitation — Plagiarism”. (*D*) *The Raven and Other [page 247:] Poems* (1845), pp. 31-51, scenes III, IV, VI, VII, IX. (*E*) J. Lorimer Graham copy of *The Raven* ..., with three slight changes on p. 34, in scene IV. (*F*) *Works* (1850), II, 54 (scenes III, IV, VI, VII, and IX from *D*). (*G*) *Works* (1850), III, 328 (scene IV, 5-27, 56-111 from *C*, in Poe’s article “Mr. Longfellow and Other Plagiarists”).

(*H*) *Baltimore Southern Magazine* for November 1875, about forty scattered lines from scenes I, II (including the rhymed song), V and X, quoted in J. H. Ingram’s article “Poe’s *Politian*,” of which there was a simultaneous publication in the first number of the *London*

Magazine of Light Literature, also dated November 1875. (J) *The Poetical Works of Edgar A. Poe* (London and New York, 1888), edited by J. H. Ingram for “Chandos Classics” (scene V); (K) *Complete Poems*, ed. J. H. Whitty (Boston, 1911), pp. 227-230, from H; (L) *The Autograph*, New York, November-December 1912, XI, 15-64, a poor transcript by Patrick F. Madigan from A; (M) *Complete Poems*, ed. Whitty (second ed., 1917, pp. 327-328), XI, 15-32; (N) *Politian*, ed. Thomas Ollive Mabbott (Richmond, 1923), from versions A, D, and E, but XI, 15-64, from L; (P) *The Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. Floyd Stovall (Charlottesville, 1965) pp. 301-340.

In the textual notes and variants on the following pages, the symbol Av indicates an insertion by Poe in the manuscript, Ax indicates a cancellation by Poe in the manuscript, and A2x or A2v indicates a pencil change by Poe in the manuscript — a change later than text B.

[[v]]

POLITIAN [A]

A Tragedy

Scene — Rome in the [16th] century.

[[v]]

Characters.

[[p]]

LALANGE, an orphan ward of Di Broglio.

[[p]]

ALESSANDRA, niece of Di Broglio, and betrothed to Castiglione.

[[p]]

JACINTA, servant maid to Lalage.

[[p]]

DUKE DI BROGLIO.

[[p]]

CASTIGLIONE, his son and heir.

[[p]]

SAN OZZO, companion of Castiglione.

[[p]]

POLITIAN. [page 248:]

[[p]]

BALDAZZAR, his friend.

[[p]]

A MONK.

[[p]]

UGO }

BENITO } Servants in the family of Di Broglio.

RUPERT }

I. [A]

An apartment in the Palazzo of Di Broglio. Traces of a protracted revel. On a wine-table some candles burnt to the socket. Masks, a lute, a lady's slipper, cards and broken bottles are strewn about the floor and on the table. Enter BENITO meeting UGO intoxicated.

[[n]]

UGO. Oh! is that you Benito (hiccup) are they gone?

BENITO. Faith that's a question, Ugo, hard to answer,

But are the bottles empty? — then they're gone.

As for the Count San Ozzo who knocked me down

5

Just now on the staircase as I came up hither,

I can with more precision speak of him —

He's gone, I'm sure of that — pretty far gone.

[[n]]

UGO. Is the bravo gone? (hiccup) where is the buffo-singer?

Did you say his Excellency had departed?

10

Are all the fiddlers off (hiccup) the devil go with them!

I'm positively stupid for want of sleep!

BENITO (*eyeing him.*) Oh you are right — quite right — being as you say

Ugo, a most confounded stupid man.

UGO. Sirrah! I said not so, or else I (hiccup) lied.

15

BENITO. I have no doubt, good Ugo, that you lied

Being, as you observe, a most notorious liar —

(*Ugo sits, and helps himself to wine. Enter RUPERT.*)

Well, master Rupert what have you done with the count?

RUPERT. What should I do with any drunken man?

I pulled him from under the table where he lay

And tumbled him into bed. [page 249:]

20

BENITO. I say, good Rupert!

Can it be the Duke di Broglio is acquainted

With these untimely revels of his son?

It is a pity in so proper a man

Is't not a pity in so young a man

25

And of so gentle blood? Here is a change

I had not look'd to see — he is sadly altered!

UGO. He is drunk, Benito, — did you not say so, Rupert?

Most men are sadly altered when they're drunk

Oh, I am sadly altered when I'm (hiccup) drunk.

30

RUPERT (*to BENITO.*) You think the Count Castiglione altered —

I think so too. He was, not long ago,

Barring some trivial improprieties,

A very nobleman in heart and deed.

BENITO. Now I've no faith in him, poor Lady Lalage!

So beautiful and kind.

35

RUPERT. Truly Benito

His conduct there has damned him in my eyes.

O villain! villain! she his plighted wife

And his own father's ward. I have noticed well

That we may date his ruin — so I call it —

40

His low debaucheries — his gambling habits

And all his numerous vices from the time

Of that most base seduction and abandonment.

[[n]]

BENITO. We may: the sin sits heavy on his soul

And goads him to these courses. They say the Duke

45

Pardons his son, but is most wroth with her

And treats her with such marked severity

[[n]]

As humbles her to the dust.

RUPERT. She sits alone

Continually in her chamber with clasped hands

[[y]]

[[n]]

(Jacinta tells me this).

[[y]]

BENITO. Ah Noble lady! [page 250:]

50

I saw her yester eve thro' the lattice-work

Of her chamber-window sobbing upon her knees

And ever and anon amid her sobs

[[n]]

She murmured forth Castiglione's name

Rupert, she loves him still!

RUPERT. How will she bear

55

Think you, the consummation of these nuptials?

Tomorrow week are they not?

BENITO. Most true! they are.

Tomorrow week Castiglione weds

His cousin Alessandra. She was the friend

The bosom friend of the fair lady Lalage

60

Ere this mischance. I cannot bear to think
On the despair of the young lady Lalage.

UGO. This wine's not bad! gentlemen why d'ye blame
My master in this matter? very good (hiccup) wine!
Who is my lady Lalage? God knows!

65

I don't, a super(hiccup)ciliary somebody
Who play'd on the guitar! most excellent wine!

[[n]]

And pride should have a fall. The count's a rake
Or was, that very sure, but he's reforming
And drinks none but the very (hiccup!) best of wine.

70

RUPERT. Let us to bed! the man is steeped in liquor.
(to BENITO.) Come let us to bed (*Exeunt* RUPERT and BENITO.)

UGO (*arousing.*) What did they say? to bed!
Is it so late? is it all gone? very well!
I will to bed anon (*Enter* JACINTA) ah! bless my eyes!
Jacinta! is it you?

JACINTA. Why, yes it is

75

And yet it isn't, Ugo, there's a riddle!
I was Jacinta yesternight, but now
Madam Jacinta if you please, Sir Ugo!

UGO. Sweetheart, I fear me (hiccup!) very much (hiccup!) that you
Have been at the bottle — a pretty madam truly!

80

JACINTA. You may well say that Sir Ugo — very pretty! [page 251:]
At all events the Count Castiglione

Tells me I'm pretty — drunken dolt look here! (*Showing some jewels*)

UGO. (Hiccup!) where?

[[v]]

JACINTA. Here! — look here!

UGO. Jacinta! (hiccup!) why, Jacinta!

You do not mean to say the count my master

Gave you those jewels!

85

JACINTA. What if he did friend Ugo?

What if he did?

[[v]]

UGO. Look here! — I'll take my oath

I saw that very ring upon the finger

The middle — the fore — no on the little finger

Of the Count. I'm (hiccup!) done with You Jacinta!

90

O you vile wretch! I'll (hiccup!) not have you Jacinta!

I'm in despair! I'll (hiccup!) do some desperate deed!

I'm desperate!

JACINTA. You're drunk!

UGO. I'm going to cut —

JACINTA. Your throat! O Heaven!

UGO. To cut you altogether!

[[v]]

I'm gone Jacinta. (*going.*)

JACINTA (*pulling him back.*) Stop! you snivelling fool!

95

Will you not see the jewels — look you here!

This broach — these pearls — these rubies — don't you see?

[[n]]

UGO (*sulkily.*) I see.

[[y]]

JACINTA. These emeralds and this topaz! — *won't* you see?

[[n]]

UGO. I see.

100

JACINTA. You see! you see! can I get nothing more

Out of your ugly mouth but “I see, I see”? —

Dolt I'm not sure you see — or if you see

You certainly see double. Here's a cross

A cross of rubies, you oaf! a cross of rubies! [page 252:]

[[n]]

105

D'ye hear — a cross which never cost a zecchin

Less than five thousand crowns!

UGO. I see, oh I (hiccup!) see it all. (*looking knowing.*)

JACINTA. You see it all!

You do not see it all. Heaven grant me patience!

You do not see it all (*mocking him*) you do not see

110

That I'm the richest waiting maid in Rome

The richest vintner's daughter owning these jewels!

[[y]]

You do not see, I say, that my mistress Lalage

Who gave them to me, d'ye hear? who gave them to me

As a free gift, and for a marriage present

115

(All of her jewels! — every one of them!)

Is certainly gone mad!

UGO. The lady Lalage

Gave you the jewels! How (hiccup!) came you by the ring?

JACINTA. The count Castiglione, your sweet master

Gave it her as a token of his love

120

Last year — she gave it to me — d'ye see?

UGO. Jacinta! (*with a leer.*)

JACINTA! Ugo! (*returning it.*)

UGO. What dear Jacinta?

JACINTA. Do you see?

UGO. Oh, nonsense, sweet Jacinta, let me look

Again (hiccup!) at the jewels!

JACINTA. D'ye see?

UGO. Pshaw! — let me look!

JACINTA. D'ye see? (*going and holding up the jewels.*)

125

UGO. Sweet, dear, Jacinta! madame Jacinta.

JACINTA. Oh I see. (*Puts them up and exit followed by UGO staggering.*)

[page 252, continued:]

II. [A]

Castiglione's dressing-room. CASTIGLIONE (*in dishabille*) and SAN OZZO.
[page 253:]

SAN OZZO. An excellent joke! I' faith an excellent joke!

Ha! ha! ha! ha! — a most superlative joke!

I shall die, Castiglione, I shall die!

Ha! ha! ha! ha! — Oh, I shall die of laughing!

I shall die, I shall die.

5

CASTIGLIONE (*sullenly.*) I meant it for no joke.

SAN OZZO. Oh no! oh no! — you meant it for no joke.

Not you! — ha! ha! ha! ha! — I'll die, I'll die!

It's a very serious business I assure you

To get drunk — a very serious business — excellent!

10

So you've turned penitent at last — bravo!

Why, Cas! I've got a string of beads at home

(I'll send them to you) — a bundle of paternosters

(You shall have them all) a robe of sackcloth too

I used at a masquerade, you shall have it — you shall have it!

15

And I'll go home and send you in a trice

A tub of excellent ashes!

CASTIGLIONE. San Ozzo! have done for — (*hesitating.*)

SAN OZZO. Oh! I am — I am done for — completely done for — I'll die!

I shall die of laughing — yes! I'm done for — I'm done for!

CASTIGLIONE (*sternly.*) San Ozzo!

SAN OZZO. Sir?

CASTIGLIONE. I am serious.

SAN OZZO. I know it — very!

20

CASTIGLIONE. Why then do you worry me with these ribald jests

I've the headach, and besides I am not well

Either in body or soul. When saw you last

The lady — Lalage?

SAN OZZO. Not for eleven months.

What could have put that creature in your head?

CASTIGLIONE (*fiercely.*) San Ozzo!

SAN OZZO (*calmly.*) Sir?

25

CASTIGLIONE (*after a pause.*) Nothing. When did you say

You spoke to the Lady Lalage? [page 254:]

SAN OZZO. Sir Count,

I have not seen her for eleven months.

The Duke your father, as you very well know,

Keeps her secluded from society

[[n]]

30

And, between you and I, he's right in it:

Ha! ha! you understand?

CASTIGLIONE. Not I, San Ozzo!

I do not understand.

SAN OZZO. Well! well! no matter (*sings.*)

[[n]]

Birds of so fine a feather

And of so wanton eye

35

Should be caged — should be caged

Should be caged in all weather

Lest they fly!

[[n]]

CASTIGLIONE. San Ozzo! you do her wrong — unmanly wrong

Never in woman's breast enthroned sat

40

A purer heart! If ever woman fell

With an excuse for falling it was she!

If ever plighted vows most sacredly

Solemnly sworn perfidiously broken

Will damn a man, that damnéd villain am I!

45

Young, ardent, beautiful, and loving well

And pure as beautiful, how could she think —

How could she dream, being herself all truth

Of my black perfidy? Oh that I were not

Castiglione but some peasant hind

50

The humble tiller of some humble field

That I might dare be honest!

SAN OZZO. Exceeding fine!

I never heard a better speech in my life.

Besides you're right — Oh! honesty's the thing!

Honesty, poverty, and true content,

55

With the unutterable extacies

Of butternuts, gingerbread, and milk and water!

CASTIGLIONE (*trying to suppress a smile.*) San Ozzo you are a fool! [page 254:]

SAN OZZO. He's right again. My lord, I'm going home,

Ere I be tainted with your wisdomship.

60

Good day! — I crave your patronage however

When you become a cardinal: meantime

I'll take the opportunity of sending

The sackcloth and the ashes. (*Exit.*)

CASTIGLIONE. Get you gone

You merry devil! ha! ha! he makes me laugh

65

Spite of myself. One can't be angry with him

For the life of one. After all I don't see why

I should so grieve about this little matter

This every-day occurrence. Marry her — no!

Castiglione wed him with a wanton!

70

Never! — oh never! — what would they say at the club?

What would San Ozzo think? I have no right

Had I the will, to bring such foul disgrace

Upon my family — Di Broglio's line

[[n]]

Di Broglio's haughty and time-honoured line!

[[n]]

75

No right at all to do it. Am I not bound too

By the most sacred ties of honor bound

To my cousin Alessandra? Honor's the thing!

I can not pawn my honor! and Lalage

Is lowly born — I can not pawn my honor.

[[y]]

80

My honor — my honor. Pshaw! Pshaw! 'tis but the headach —
The consequence of yestereve's debauch —
Gives me these qualms of conscience. Be a man!
A man, Castiglione, be a man!
A glass of wine will put you all to rights.
Ugo! — do you hear there? — wine!
(*Enter UGO, bearing a bundle and a basket full of bottles.*)

85

What the devil's that?

UGO (*hesitatingly.*) My lord!

CASTIGLIONE. What's that I say? — where is the wine?

UGO. My lord! — the wine? — here is some wine my lord —
A dozen bottles, my lord. [page 256:]

CASTIGLIONE. A dozen fools!
Bring me a *glass* of wine!

UGO. A dozen bottles

[[n]]

90

So please you, Sir, of best Salerno brand
Sent as a present by his reverence
The Count San Ozzo.

CASTIGLIONE. Really I'm much obliged
(*smiling*) To his reverence — did you not say his reverence?
Uncork a bottle, Ugo, and let me see
What it is made of.

95

UGO. No, Sir, you can't have any.

CASTIGLIONE. How, Sir! — not have it? — what do you mean by that?

UGO. Not a drop, Sir, — not a drop.

CASTIGLIONE. And why? you ass.

UGO. Why, Sir, you see, the servant who brings it says
You're not to have the wine, only your choice.

CASTIGLIONE. What does the idiot mean?

100

UGO. There's another present
Down in the hall, Sir, — you're to have your choice
Of the wine or of that.

CASTIGLIONE. Blockhead! why don't you bring
The other present in?

UGO. Eh? — Sir?

[[y]]

CASTIGLIONE. Dolt! dunderhead! why don't you bring me up
The other present and let me see it?

105

UGO. I can't.

CASTIGLIONE. You can't! you villain? I'll try and make you then!

[[y]]

(*in a passion*) Scoundrel bring it up! What's that you have on your shoulder?

[[y]]

UGO. Sir? — it's the sackcloth, and that down below

(*throwing down the bundle*) 'S a monstrous tub of ashes —

I can't lift it. [page 257:]

110

CASTIGLIONE. A monstrous tub of ashes! San Ozzo's a fool!

Ha! ha! ha! ha! too bad upon my soul!

A tub of ashes! too bad! I can't be angry

[[v]]

If I should die for it — to have my choice

The wine or the ashes! Ugo, send word to the Count

115

Ha! ha! ha! ha! — Ugo send word to the Count

I'll keep the wine, and he may have the ashes.

[[v]]

Stay! — tell him I've been thinking — I've been thinking

Of what he said — he knows — and that I'll meet him

[[n]]

At the masquerade, and afterwards crack a bottle

(*Exit UGO*)

120

With him and the buffo-singer. Ha! ha! ha!

Only to think of that! a tub of ashes!

Ha! ha! ha! ha! I *can't* be angry with him!

He's a fine fellow after all, San Ozzo! (*Exit.*)

[page 257, continued:]

[[v]]

III. [D]

ROME. — *A Hall in a Palace.* ALESSANDRA and CASTIGLIONE.

ALESSANDRA. Thou art sad, Castiglione.

CASTIGLIONE. Sad! — not I.

Oh, I'm the happiest, happiest man in Rome!

A few days more, thou knowest, my Alessandra,

Will make thee mine. Oh, I am very happy!

5

ALESSANDRA. Methinks thou hast a singular way of showing

Thy happiness! — what ails thee, cousin of mine?

Why didst thou sigh so deeply?

CASTIGLIONE. Did I sigh?

I was not conscious of it. It is a fashion,

A silly — a most silly fashion I have

10

When I am *very* happy. Did I sigh? (*sighing.*)

ALESSANDRA. Thou didst. Thou art not well. Thou has indulged [page 258:]

Too much of late, and I am vexed to see it.

Late hours and wine, Castiglione, — these

Will ruin thee! thou art already altered —

15

Thy looks are haggard — nothing so wears away

The constitution as late hours and wine.

CASTIGLIONE (*musings*.) Nothing, fair cousin, nothing — not even deep sorrow —

Wears it away like evil hours and wine.

I will amend.

ALESSANDRA. Do it! I would have thee drop

20

Thy riotous company, too — fellows low born —

Ill suit the like with old Di Broglio's heir

And Alessandra's husband.

CASTIGLIONE. I will drop them.

[[y]]

[[n]]

ALESSANDRA. Thou wilt — thou must. Attend thou also more

[[v]]

To thy dress and equipage — they are over plain

25

For thy lofty rank and fashion — much depends

Upon appearances.

[[v]]

CASTIGLIONE. I'll see to it.

ALESSANDRA. Then see to it! — pay more attention, sir,

To a becoming carriage — much thou wantest

In dignity.

CASTIGLIONE. Much, much, oh much I want

In proper dignity.

30

ALESSANDRA (*haughtily.*) Thou mockest me, sir!

[[v]]

CASTIGLIONE (*abstractedly.*) Sweet, gentle Lalage!

ALESSANDRA. Heard I aright?

I speak to him — he speaks of Lalage!

Sir Count! (*places her hand on his shoulder*) what art thou dreaming? he's not well!

What ails thee, sir?

CASTIGLIONE (*starting.*) Cousin! fair cousin! — madam!

[[v]]

[[n]]

35

I crave thy pardon — indeed I am not well —

Your hand from off my shoulder, if you please. [page 259:]

This air is most oppressive! — Madam — the Duke!

(Enter DI BROGLIO.)

DI BROGLIO. My son, I've news for thee! — hey? — what's the matter? (*observing ALESSANDRA.*)

[[y]]

I' the pouts? Kiss her, Castiglione! kiss her,

[[y]]

40

You dog! and make it up, I say, this minute!

I've news for you both. Politian is expected

Hourly in Rome — Politian, Earl of Leicester!

We'll have him at the wedding. 'Tis his first visit

To the imperial city.

ALESSANDRA. What! Politian

Of Britain, Earl of Leicester?

[[n]]

45

DI BROGLIO. The same, my love.

[[y]]

We'll have him at the wedding. A man quite young

[[y]]

In years, but grey in fame. I have not seen him,

But Rumour speaks of him as of a prodigy

Pre-eminent in arts and arms, and wealth,

50

And high descent. We'll have him at the wedding.

ALESSANDRA. I have heard much of this Politian.

Gay, volatile and giddy — is he not?

And little given to thinking.

DI BROGLIO. Far from it, love.

[[n]]

No branch, they say, of all philosophy

55

So deep abstruse he has not mastered it.

Learned as few are learned.

ALESSANDRA. 'Tis very strange!

I have known men have seen Politian

And sought his company. They speak of him

As of one who entered madly into life,

60

Drinking the cup of pleasure to the dregs.

CASTIGLIONE. Ridiculous! Now *I* have seen Politian

And know him well — nor learned nor mirthful he.

He is a dreamer and a man shut out

From common passions.

DI BROGLIO. Children, we disagree. [page 260:]

65

Let us go forth and taste the fragrant air

Of the garden. Did dream, or did I hear

[[n]]

Politian was a *melancholy* man? (*exeunt.*)

[page 260, continued:]

[[v]]

IV. [E]

A Lady's apartment, with a window open and looking into a garden. LALANGE, in deep mourning, reading at a table on which lie some books and a hand mirror. In the background JACINTA (a servant maid) leans carelessly upon a chair. [[v]]

[[v]]

LALANGE. Jacinta! is it thou?

JACINTA (*pertly.*) Yes, Ma'am, I'm here.

LALANGE. I did not know, Jacinta, you were in waiting.

Sit down! — let not my presence trouble you —

Sit down! — for I am humble, most humble.

[[n]]

JACINTA (*aside.*) 'Tis time.

(JACINTA *seats herself in a side-long manner upon the chair, resting her elbows upon the back, and regarding her mistress with a contemptuous look. LALANGE continues to read.*)

[[v]]

[[n]]

5

LALANGE. “It in another climate, so he said,

“Bore a bright golden flower, but not i’ this soil!”

[[v]]

(*pauses — turns over some leaves, and resumes.*)

[[n]]

“No lingering winters there, nor snow, nor shower —

“But Ocean ever to refresh mankind

“Breathes the shrill spirit of the western wind.”

10

Oh, beautiful! — most beautiful! — how like

To what my fevered soul doth dream of Heaven!

O happy land! (*pauses.*) She died! — the maiden died!

O still more happy maiden who couldst die!

Jacinta! [page 261:]

(JACINTA *returns no answer; and LALANGE presently resumes.*)

[[v]]

[[n]]

Again! — a similar tale

[[v]]

15

Told of a beauteous dame beyond the sea!

[[v]]

Thus speaketh one Ferdinand in the words of the play —

“She died full young” — one Bossola answers him —

“I think not so — her infelicity

“Seemed to have years too many” — Ah luckless lady!

Jacinta! (*still no answer.*)

[[v]]

[[n]]

20

Here’s a far sterner story

But like — oh, very like in its despair —

Of that Egyptian queen, winning so easily

A thousand hearts — losing at length her own.

[[v]]

She died. Thus endeth the history — and her maids

25

Lean over her and weep — two gentle maids

With gentle names — Eiros and Charmion!

[[v]]

[[n]]

Rainbow and Dove! — Jacinta!

[[v]]

JACINTA (*pettishly.*) Madam, what is it?

LALANGE. Wilt thou, my good Jacinta, be so kind

As go down in the library and bring me

The Holy Evangelists.

JACINTA. Pshaw! (*exit.*)

[[n]]

30

LALANGE. If there be balm

For the wounded spirit in Gilead it is there!

Dew in the night time of my bitter trouble

[[n]]

Will there be found — “dew sweeter far than that
Which hangs like chains of pearls on Hermon hill.”

(*re-enter JACINTA, and throws a volume on the table.*)

35

[JACINTA] There, ma’am, ’s the book. Indeed she is very
troublesome. (*aside.*)

LALANGE (*astonished.*) What didst thou say, Jacinta? Have I done aught
To grieve thee or to vex thee? — I am sorry.
For thou hast served me long and ever been
Trust-worthy and respectful. (*resumes her reading.*) [page 262:]

JACINTA, I can’t believe

40

She has any more jewels — no — no — she gave me all. (*aside.*)

LALANGE. What didst thou say, Jacinta? Now I bethink me
Thou hast not spoken lately of thy wedding.
How fares good Ugo? — and when is it to be?
Can I do aught? — is there no farther aid
Thou needest, Jacinta?

45

JACINTA. Is there no *farther* aid!
That’s meant for me. (*aside*) I’m sure, Madam, you need not
Be always throwing those jewels in my teeth.

LALANGE. Jewels! Jacinta, — now indeed, Jacinta,
I thought not of the jewels.

JACINTA. Oh! perhaps not!

50

But then I might have sworn it. After all,
There's Ugo says the ring is only paste,
For he's sure the Count Castiglione never
Would have given a real diamond to such as you;
And at the best I'm certain, Madam, you cannot

55

Have use for jewels *now*. But I might have sworn it. (*exit.*)

[[y]]

(LALANGE *bursts into tears and leans her head upon the table — after a short pause raises it.*)

[[n]]

LALANGE. Poor Lalage! — and is it come to this?

Thy servant maid! — but courage! — 'tis but a viper
Whom thou hast cherished to sting thee to the soul! (*taking up the mirror.*)
Ha! here at least's a friend — too much a friend

60

In earlier days — a friend will not deceive thee.
Fair mirror and true! now tell me (for thou canst)
A tale — a pretty tale — and heed thou not
Though it be rife with woe. It answers me.
It speaks of sunken eyes, and wasted cheeks,

65

And Beauty long deceased — remembers me

[[n]]

Of Joy departed — Hope, the Seraph Hope, [page 263:]

[[n]]

Inurned and entombed! — now, in a tone
Low, sad, and solemn, but most audible,
Whispers of early grave untimely yawning

70

For ruined maid. Fair mirror and true! — thou liest not!
Thou hast no end to gain — no heart to break —
Castiglione lied who said he loved —

[[n]]

Thou true — he false! — false! — false!

(while she speaks, a monk enters her apartment, and approaches unobserved.)

MONK. Refuge thou hast,

Sweet daughter! in Heaven. Think of eternal things!

75

Give up thy soul to penitence, and pray!

[[y]]

LALANGE *(arising hurriedly.)* I cannot pray! — My soul is at war with God!

[[n]]

The frightful sounds of merriment below

Disturb my senses — go! I cannot pray —

The sweet airs from the garden worry me!

80

Thy presence grieves me — go! — thy priestly raiment

Fills me with dread — thy ebony crucifix

With horror and awe!

[[n]]

MONK. Think of thy precious soul!

LALANGE. Think of my early days! — think of my father

And mother in Heaven! think of our quiet home,

85

And the rivulet that ran before the door!

Think of my little sisters! — think of them!

And think of me! — think of my trusting love

And confidence — his vows — my ruin — think — think

Of my unspeakable misery! — begone!

90

Yet stay! yet stay! — what was it thou saidst of prayer

And penitence? Didst thou not speak of faith

And vows before the throne?

MONK. I did.

LALANGE. 'Tis well.

There is a vow were fitting should be made —

A sacred vow, imperative, and urgent,

A solemn vow! [page 264:]

95

MONK. Daughter, this zeal is well!

LALANGE. Father, this zeal is anything but well!

Hast thou a crucifix fit for this thing?

A crucifix whereon to register

[[y]]

This sacred vow? (*he hands her his own.*)

100

Not that — Oh no! — no! — no! (*shuddering.*)

Not that! Not that! — I tell thee, holy man,

Thy raiments and thy ebony cross affright me!

Stand back! I have a crucifix myself, —

I have a crucifix! Methinks 'twere fitting

The deed — the vow — the symbol of the deed —

[[y]]

105

And the deed's register should tally, father!

[[n]]

(*draws a cross-handled dagger and raises it on high.*)

Behold the cross wherewith a vow like mine

Is written in Heaven!

[[n]]

MONK. Thy words are madness, daughter,

And speak a purpose unholy — thy lips are livid —

Thine eyes are wild — tempt not the wrath divine!

110

Pause ere too late! — oh be not — be not rash!

[[n]]

Swear not the oath — oh swear it not!

LALANGE. 'Tis sworn!

[page 264, continued:]

V. [A]

[*A room in the palace of* DI BROGLIO. *DI BROGLIO and CASTIGLIONE.*]

[[n]]

[CASTIGLIONE -----]

Undoubtedly.

DUKE. Why do you laugh?

CASTIGLIONE. Indeed

I hardly know myself. Stay! was it not

On yesterday we were speaking of the Earl?

Of the Earl Politian? Yes it was yesterday. [page 265:]

5

Alessandra, you and I, you must remember!

We were walking in the garden.

DUKE. Perfectly

[[y]]

I do remember it — what of it? — what then?

CASTIGLIONE. O nothing — nothing at all.

DUKE. Nothing at all!

It is most singular now that you should laugh

At nothing at all!

CASTIGLIONE. Most singular — singular!

DUKE. Look you, Castiglione, be so kind

As tell me, Sir, at once what is't you mean.

What are you talking of?

CASTIGLIONE. Was it not so?

We differed in opinion touching him.

DUKE. Him! — whom?

15

CASTIGLIONE. Why, Sir, the Earl Politian.

DUKE. The Earl of Leicester! — yes! — is it he you mean?

We differed indeed. If I now recollect

The words you used were that the Earl you knew

Was neither learned nor mirthful.

CASTIGLIONE. Ha! ha! — now did I?

20

DUKE. That did you, Sir, and well I knew at the time

You were wrong — it being not the character

Of the Earl — whom all the world allows to be

A most hilarious man. Be not, my son,

Too positive again.

CASTIGLIONE. 'Tis singular!

25

Most singular! I could not think it possible

So little time could so much alter one!

To say the truth about an hour ago

As I was walking with the Count San Ozzo

All arm in arm we met this very man

30

The Earl — he with his friend Baldazzar
Having just arrived in Rome. Ha! ha! he is altered!
Such an account he gave me of his journey! [page 266:]
'Twould have made you die with laughter — such tales he told
Of his caprices and his merry freaks

35

Along the road — such oddity — such humour

[[n]]

Such wit — such whim — such flashes of wild merriment
Set off too in such full relief by the grave
Demeanour of his friend — who to speak the truth

[[y]]

Was gravity itself.

DUKE. Did I not tell you?

[[n]]

40

CASTIGLIONE. You did — and yet 'tis strange! but true as strange.

How much I was mistaken! I always thought
The Earl a gloomy man.

DUKE. So, So, you see.

Be not too positive. Whom have we here?
It cannot be the Earl?

CASTIGLIONE. The Earl! oh, no!

45

'Tis not the Earl — but yet it is — and leaning
Upon his friend Baldazzar. Ah! welcome, Sir!
(Enter POLITIAN and BALDAZZAR.)
My Lord! a second welcome let me give you
To Rome — his Grace the Duke of Broglio.
Father! this is the Earl Politian, Earl

50

Of Leicester in Great Britain, (POLITIAN *bows haughtily*) this his friend
Baldazzar, Duke of Surrey. The Earl has letters,
So please you for your Grace.

DUKE. Ah — ha! most welcome

To Rome and to our palace Earl Politian!
And you most noble Duke! am glad to see you!

55

I knew your father well, my lord Politian.
Castiglione! call your cousin hither
And let me make the noble Earl acquainted
With your betrothed. You come, Sir, at a time
Most seasonable. The wedding —

POLITIAN. Touching those letters, Sir, [page 267:]

60

Your son made mention of — (your son is he not?)
Touching those letters, Sir, I wot not of them.
If such there be, my friend Baldazzar here —
Baldazzar! — ah! — my friend Baldazzar here
Will hand them to your Grace. I would retire.

DUKE. Retire! — so soon?

65

CASTIGLIONE. What ho! Benito! Rupert!

His lordship's chambers — show his lordship to them!
His lordship is unwell! (*Enter BENITO.*)

BENITO. This way my lord! (*Exit followed by POLITIAN.*)

DUKE. Retire! — unwell!

[[v]]

BALDAZZAR. So please you, Sir, I fear me

'Tis as you say — his lordship is unwell.

70

The damp air of the evening — the fatigue

Of a long journey — the — indeed I had better

Follow his lordship. He must be unwell.

I will return anon.

DUKE. Return anon!

Now this is very strange! Castiglione!

75

This way, my son, I wish to speak with thee.

You surely were mistaken in what you said

Of the Earl, mirthful indeed! — which of us said

[[n]]

Politian was a melancholy man? (*Exeunt.*)

[page 267, continued:]

[[y]]

[[n]]

VI. [D]

An apartment in a palace. POLITIAN and BALDAZZAR. [[y]]

BALDAZZAR. ——— Arouse thee now, Politian!

Thou must not — nay indeed, indeed, thou shalt not

Give way unto these humours. Be thyself!

Shake off the idle fancies that beset thee,

And live, for now thou diest!

5

POLITIAN. Not so, Baldazzar!

[[y]]

Surely I live. [page 268:]

BALDAZZAR. Politian, it doth grieve me

To see thee thus.

POLITIAN. Baldazzar, it does grieve me

To give thee cause for grief, my honoured friend.

Command me, sir! what wouldst thou have me do?

10

At thy behest I will shake off that nature

Which from my forefathers I did inherit,

Which with my mother's milk I did imbibe,

And be no more Politian, but some other.

Command me, sir!

BALDAZZAR. To the field then — to the field —

To the senate or the field.

15

POLITIAN. Alas! alas!

There is an imp would follow me even there!

There is an imp *hath* followed me even there!

There is — what voice was that?

BALDAZZAR. I heard it not.

I heard not any voice except thine own,

And the echo of thine own.

POLITIAN. Then I but dreamed.

20

BALDAZZAR. Give not thy soul to dreams: the camp — the court

[[n]]

Befit thee — Fame awaits thee — Glory calls —

[[n]]

And her the trumpet-tongued thou wilt not hear

[[n]]

In hearkening to imaginary sounds

[[n]]

And phantom voices.

[[n]]

25

POLITIAN. It is a phantom voice!

Didst thou not hear it *then*?

BALDAZZAR. I heard it not.

POLITIAN. Thou heardest it not! — Baldazzar, speak no more

To me, Politian, of thy camps and courts.

[[n]]

Oh! I am sick, sick, sick, even unto death,

30

Of the hollow and high-sounding vanities

[[n]]

Of the populous Earth! Bear with me yet awhile!

We have been boys together — school-fellows —

And now are friends — yet shall not be so long —

[[n]]

For in the eternal city thou shalt do me [page 269:]

35

A kind and gentle office, and a Power —

A Power august, benignant and supreme —

Shall then absolve thee of all farther duties

Unto thy friend.

BALDAZZAR. Thou speakest a fearful riddle

I *will* not understand.

POLITIAN. Yet now as Fate

[[n]]

40

Approaches, and the Hours are breathing low,

[[n]]

The sands of Time are changed to golden grains,
And dazzle me, Baldazzar. Alas! alas!
I *cannot* die, having within my heart
So keen a relish for the beautiful

45

As hath been kindled within it. Methinks the air
Is balmier now than it was wont to be —
Rich melodies are floating in the winds —
A rarer loveliness bedecks the earth —
And with a holier lustre the quiet moon

50

Sitteth in Heaven. — Hist! hist! thou canst not say
Thou hearest not *now*, Baldazzar?

BALDAZZAR. Indeed I hear not.

POLITIAN. Not hear it! — listen now — listen! — the faintest sound

And yet the sweetest that ear ever heard!
A lady's voice! — and sorrow in the tone!

[[n]]

55

Baldazzar, it oppresses me like a spell!
Again! — again! — how solemnly it falls

[[y]]

[[n]]

Into my heart of hearts! that eloquent voice

[[y]]

Surely I never heard — yet it were well
Had I *but* heard it with its thrilling tones
In earlier days!

[[n]]

60

BALDAZZAR. I myself hear it now.

Be still! — the voice, if I mistake not greatly,

[[v]]

Proceeds from yonder lattice — which you may see

[[v]]

Very plainly through the window — it belongs, [page 270:]

Does it not? unto this palace of the Duke.

65

The singer is undoubtedly beneath

The roof of his Excellency — and perhaps

Is even that Alessandra of whom he spoke

As the betrothed of Castiglione,

His son and heir.

POLITIAN. Be still! — it comes again!

[[n]]

70

Voice “And is thy heart so strong

(*very faintly.*) As for to leave me thus

Who hath loved thee so long

In wealth and wo among?

And is thy heart so strong

75

As for to leave me thus?

Say nay — say nay!”

BALDAZZAR. The song is English, and I oft have heard it

In merry England — never so plaintively —

[[v]]

Hist! hist! it comes again!

Voice “Is it so strong

80

(*more loudly.*) As for to leave me thus

Who hath loved thee so long

In wealth and wo among?
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?

85

Say nay — say nay!”

BALDAZZAR. ’Tis hushed and all is still!

POLITIAN. All *is not* still. [page 271:]

BALDAZZAR. Let us go down.

POLITIAN. Go down, Baldazzar, go!

BALDAZZAR. The hour is growing late — the Duke awaits us, —
Thy presence is expected in the hall

90

Below. What ails thee, Earl Politian?

Voice “Who hath loved thee so long,
(*distinctly.*) In wealth and wo among,
And is thy heart so strong?
Say nay — say nay!”

95

BALDAZZAR. Let us descend! — ’tis time. Politian, give
These fancies to the wind. Remember, pray,

[[n]]

Your bearing lately savoured much of rudeness
Unto the Duke. Arouse thee! and remember!

POLITIAN. Remember? I do. Lead on! I *do* remember. (*going.*)

[[v]]

100

Let us descend. Believe me I would give,

Freely would give the broad lands of my earldom
To look upon the face hidden by yon lattice —

[[n]]

“To gaze upon that veiled face, and hear
Once more that silent tongue.”

BALDAZZAR. Let me beg you sir,

105

Descend with me — the Duke may be offended.

Let us go down, I pray you.

(*Voice loudly.*) *Say nay! — say nay!*

POLITIAN (*aside.*) 'Tis strange! — 'tis very strange — methought the voice

Chimed in with my desires and bade me stay!

(*approaching the window.*)

Sweet voice! I heed thee, and will surely stay.

110

Now be this Fancy, by Heaven, or be it Fate,

Still will I not descend. Baldazzar, make

Apology unto the Duke for me;

I go not down tonight.

BALDAZZAR. Your lordship's pleasure

Shall be attended to. Good night, Politian.

115

POLITIAN. Good night, my friend, good night.

[page 272:]

[[v]]

[[n]]

VII. [D]

The gardens of a palace — Moonlight. LALANGE and POLITIAN. [[v]]

LALANGE. And dost thou speak of love

To *me*, Politian? — dost thou speak of love
To Lalage? — ah wo — ah wo is me!
This mockery is most cruel! — most cruel indeed!

[[y]]

5

POLITIAN. Weep not! oh, sob not thus! — thy bitter tears

[[y]]

Will madden me. Oh mourn not, Lalage —
Be comforted! I know — I know it all,
And *still* I speak of love. Look at me, brightest,

[[y]]

And beautiful Lalage! — turn here thine eyes!

10

Thou askest me if I could speak of love,
Knowing what I know, and seeing what I have seen.
Thou askest me that — and thus I answer thee —
Thus on my bended knee I answer thee. (*kneeling.*)
Sweet Lalage, *I love thee — love thee — love thee;*

15

Thro' good and ill — thro' weal and wo I *love thee.*

[[y]]

Not mother, with her first born on her knee,
Thrills with intenser love than I for thee.
Not on God's altar, in any time or clime,
Burned there a holier fire than burneth now

[[y]]

[[n]]

20

Within my spirit for *thee*. And do I love? (*arising.*)
Even for thy woes I love thee — even for thy woes —
Thy beauty and thy woes.

LALANGE. Alas, proud Earl,

Thou dost forget thyself, remembering me!

How, in thy father's halls, among the maidens

25

Pure and reproachless of thy princely line, [page 273:]

Could the dishonoured Lalage abide?

Thy wife, and with a tainted memory —

[[n]]

My seared and blighted name, how would it tally

With the ancestral honours of thy house,

And with thy glory?

[[y]]

30

POLITIAN. Speak not to me of glory!

I hate — I loathe the name; I do abhor

[[n]]

The unsatisfactory and ideal thing.

Art thou not Lalage and I Politian?

Do I not love — art thou not beautiful —

35

What need we more? Ha! glory! — now speak not of it!

By all I hold most sacred and most solemn —

By all my wishes now — my fears hereafter —

[[n]]

By all I scorn on earth and hope in heaven —

There is no deed I would more glory in,

40

Than in thy cause to scoff at this same glory

And trample it under foot. What matters it —

What matters it, my fairest, and my best,

[[n]]

That we go down unhonoured and forgotten

Into the dust — so we descend together.

45

Descend together — and then — and then perchance —

LALANGE. Why dost thou pause, Politian?

POLITIAN. And then perchance

Arise together, Lalage, and roam

The starry and quiet dwellings of the blest,

And still —

LALANGE. Why dost thou pause, Politian?

50

POLITIAN. And still *together* — *together*.

LALANGE. Now Earl of Leicester!

Thou *lovest* me, and in my heart of hearts

I feel thou *lovest* me truly.

POLITIAN. Oh, Lalage! (*throwing himself upon his knee.*)

And *lovest* thou *me*?

LALANGE. Hist! hush! within the gloom

[[v]]

[[n]]

Of yonder trees methought a figure past —

55

A spectral figure, solemn, and slow, and noiseless — [page 274:]

Like the grim shadow Conscience, solemn and noiseless.

[[n]]

(*walks across and returns.*)

I was mistaken — 'twas but a giant bough

[[v]]

Stirred by the autumn wind. Politian!

POLITIAN. My Lalage — my love! why art thou moved?

[[v]]

60

Why dost thou turn so pale? Not Conscience' self,
Far less a shadow which thou likenest to it,
Should shake the firm spirit thus. But the night wind

[[y]]

[[n]]

Is chilly — and these melancholy boughs
Throw over all things a gloom.

LALANGE. Politian!

[[y]]

[[n]]

65

Thou speakest to me of love. Knowest thou the land

[[y]]

With which all tongues are busy — a land new found —

[[n]]

Miraculously found by one of Genoa —
A thousand leagues within the golden west?

[[n]]

A fairy land of flowers, and fruit, and sunshine,

70

And crystal lakes, and over-arching forests,
And mountains, around whose towering summits the winds
Of Heaven untrammelled flow — which air to breathe
Is Happiness now, and will be Freedom hereafter
In days that are to come?

POLITIAN. O, wilt thou — wilt thou

75

Fly to that Paradise — my Lalage, wilt thou
Fly thither with me? There Care shall be forgotten,
And Sorrow shall be no more, and Eros be all.

[[n]]

And life shall then be mine, for I will live
For thee, and in thine eyes — and thou shalt be

80

No more a mourner — but the radiant Joys
Shall wait upon thee, and the angel Hope
Attend thee ever; and I will kneel to thee

[[n]]

And worship thee, and call thee my beloved,
My own, my beautiful, my love, my wife, [page 275:]

85

My all; — oh, wilt thou — wilt thou, Lalage,
Fly thither with me?

LALANGE. A deed is to be done —
Castiglione lives!

POLITIAN. And he shall die! (*exit.*)

LALANGE (*after a pause.*) And — he — shall — die! — alas!
Castiglione die? Who spoke the words?

90

Where am I? — what was it he said? — Politian!
Thou *art* not gone — thou art not *gone*, Politian!
I *feel* thou art not gone — yet dare not look,
Lest I behold thee not; thou *couldst* not go
With those words upon thy lips — O, speak to me!

95

And let me hear thy voice — one word — one word,
To say thou art not gone, — one little sentence,
To say how thou dost scorn — how thou dost hate
My womanly weakness. Ha! ha! thou *art* not gone —
O speak to me! I *knew* thou wouldst not go!

[[n]]

100

I knew thou wouldst not, couldst not, *durst* not go.
Villain, thou *art* not gone — thou mockest me!
And thus I clutch thee — thus! — He is gone, he is gone —

Gone — gone. Where am I? — 'tis well — 'tis very well!

So that the blade be keen — the blow be sure,

105

'Tis well, 'tis very well — alas! alas! (*exit.*)

[page 275, continued:]

[[v]]

VIII. [A]

A street near a Palace. Bells ringing and shouts heard in the distance. Several persons cross and recross the stage rapidly. Enter BENITO walking quickly, and followed by RUPERT at the same pace. [[v]]

RUPERT. What ho! Benito! did you say to-night?

Is it to night — the wedding?

BENITO. To night I believe. (*Exeunt.*)

(Enter JACINTA fantastically dressed, and bearing a [page 276:] flat band-box. She enters at first quickly — then saunteringly — and finally stops near the middle of the stage, and is lost in the contemplation of the jewels upon one of her hands, which is ungloved. She at length sets down the band-box and looks at a watch hanging by her side.)

[[v]]

JACINTA. It is not late — o no! it is not late —

What need is there of hurry? I'll answer for it

5

There's time enough to spare — now let me see!

The wedding is to be at dark, and here

The day is not half done, — stay I can tell

To a minute how many hours there are between

This time and dark — one, two, three, four, five, six!

10

Six hours! why I can very easily do

The whole of my errands in two hours at farthest!

Who'd be without a watch? — these are pretty gloves!

I will not walk myself to death at all —

I won't — I'll take my time.

[[v]]

(Seats herself on a bank and kicks the bandbox to and fro with an air of nonchalance). BENITO *recrosses the stage rapidly with a bundle.*)

Look you Benito!

15

Benito! I say — Benito! — don't you hear?

The impudent varlet not to answer me!

The wretch not even to deign to condescend

[[n]]

To see me, as I sit upon the bank

Looking so like a lady! *I'm* a lady!

20

I am indeed! — but after all I think

There is a difference between some ladies

And others — the ignorant, stupid, villain! —

Between my former mistress, Lalage,

[[y]]

For instance, and my present noble mistress

25

The lady Alessandra. I made a change

For the better I think — indeed I'm sure of it —

Besides, you know it was impossible [page 277:]

When such reports have been in circulation

To stay with her now. She'd nothing of the lady

30

About her — not a tittle! One would have thought

She was a peasant girl, she was so humble.

I *hate* all humble people! — and then she talked

To one with such an air of condescension.

And she had not common sense — of that I'm sure

35

Or would she, now — I ask you now, Jacinta,

Do you, or do you not suppose your mistress

Had common sense or understanding when

[[y]]

She gave you all these jewels?

(RUPERT *recrosses the stage rapidly and without noticing JACINTA.*)

That man's a fool

Or he would not be in a hurry — he would have stopped —

40

If he had not been a *fool* he would have stopped —

[[y]]

[[n]]

[Took] off his hat, and, making a low bow,

Said "I am most superlatively happy

To see you, *Madam* Jacinta." Well I don't know

Some people are fools by nature — some have a talent

45

For being stupid — look at that ass now, Ugo,

He thinks I'll have him — but oh no! — I couldn't.

He might as well, for all the use he makes of it,

Have been born without a head. Heigho! what's this?

Oh! it's the paper that my lady gave me,

50

With the list of articles she wants — ten yards

Of taffeta — sixteen of gold brocade —

[[n]]

And ten of Genoa velvet — one, two, three,

(*As she counts, she tears a slip from the paper at each number, and arranges it on the floor in an abstracted manner.*)

Four, five, six, seven — that's it — now eight, nine, ten,

[[y]]

Ten yards — I can't forget it now — ten yards — [page 278:]

55

Ten yards of velvet — I must try and get me

A dress of Genoa velvet — 'tis becoming.

And I would look so like my lady in it!

Methinks I see her now — Oh! she's a lady

Worth serving indeed — oh she has airs and graces

60

And dignity — yes! she has dignity.

(Arises and struts affectedly across the stage.)

And then she has a voice. Heavens! what a voice!

So loud, so lady-like, and so commanding!

“Jacinta, get me this” — “D’ye hear? — bring that”

“And tell the Count Castiglione I want him.”

65

Then “yes ma’am” I reply, and curtsy thus

Meekly and daintily thus. Oh! I’m a maid

One in a thousand for a dainty curtsy.

But when I get to be a lady — when

I wed the apothecary — oh then it will be

70

A different thing — a different thing indeed!

I’ll play my lady to a T, that will I.

I’ll be all dignity, and I’ll talk thus

“Ugo, you villain!” (Ugo shall be my servant)

(During this part of the soliloquy UGO enters unperceived and in his astonishment treads upon the bandbox, and remains with his foot in it, as if stupified.)

“Ugo you villain! — look you here, you rascal!

75

“You good-for-nothing, idle, lazy scoundrel!

“What are you doing here? Begone you ugly

[[n]]

“You silly, sulky, dirty, stupid ideot!

“Begone I say this minute — get out you viper.

“Get out you jackass! — out you vagabond!”

80

And *then* if he’s not gone in half a moment

I’ll turn about and let him have it (*seeing UGO whom she encounters in turning round*) — who’s this

It’s he, by all that’s good, it is himself!

[[y]]

I’ll turn about and let him have it so — (*striking him.*)

It’s as well now as any other time —

85

Thus — thus — I’ll let him have it thus — thus — thus. [page 279:]

You wretch! what are you doing with your foot

Stuffed in that bandbox? I'll let him have it thus

Thus — thus — (*Exit UGO followed by JACINTA who throws the bandbox after him.*)

[page 279, continued:]

[[v]]

IX. [D]

The suburbs. POLITIAN *alone.* [[v]]

[[n]]

POLITIAN. This weakness grows upon me. I am faint,

And much I fear me ill — it will not do

To die ere I have lived! — Stay — stay thy hand,

[[n]]

O Azrael, yet awhile! — Prince of the Powers

5

Of Darkness and the Tomb, O pity me!

O pity me! let me not perish now,

[[v]]

In the budding of my Paradisal Hope!

Give me to live yet — yet a little while:

'Tis I who pray for life — I who so late

10

Demanded but to die! — what sayeth the Count?

(*Enter BALDAZZAR.*)

BALDAZZAR. That knowing no cause of quarrel or of feud

Between the Earl Politian and himself,

He doth decline your cartel.

POLITIAN. *What* didst thou say?

What answer was it you brought me, good Baldazzar?

15

With what excessive fragrance the zephyr comes

Laden from yonder bowers! — a fairer day,
Or one more worthy Italy, methinks
No mortal eyes have seen! — *what* said the Count?

BALDAZZAR. That he, Castiglione, not being aware
20

Of any feud existing, or any cause
Of quarrel between your lordship and himself
Cannot accept the challenge.

POLITIAN. It is most true —

All this is very true. When saw you, sir, [page 280:]
When saw you now, Baldazzar, in the frigid

25

Ungenial Britain which we left so lately,
A heaven so calm as this — so utterly free
From the evil taint of clouds? — and he did *say*?

BALDAZZAR. No more, my Lord, than I have told you, sir:

The Count Castiglione will not fight,
Having no cause for quarrel.

30

POLITIAN. Now this is true —

All very true. Thou art my friend, Baldazzar,
And I have not forgotten it — thou'lt do me
A piece of service; wilt thou go back and say
Unto this man, that I, the Earl of Leicester,

35

Hold him a villain? — thus much, I prythee, say
Unto the Count — it is exceeding just
He should have cause for quarrel.

[[n]]

BALDAZZAR. My lord! — my friend! —

POLITIAN (*aside*.) 'Tis he — he comes himself! (*aloud*.) thou reasonest well.

I know what thou wouldst say — not send the message —

40

Well! — I will think of it — I will not send it.

Now prythee, leave me — hither doth come a person

With whom affairs of a most private nature

I would adjust.

BALDAZZAR. I go — to-morrow we meet,

Do we not? — at the Vatican.

[[v]]

POLITIAN. At the Vatican. (*exit* BALDAZZAR.)

(*Enter* CASTIGLIONE.)

45

CASTIGLIONE. The Earl of Leicester here!

POLITIAN. I *am* the Earl of Leicester, and thou seest,

Dost thou not? that I am here.

CASTIGLIONE. My lord, some strange,

Some singular mistake — misunderstanding —

Hath without doubt arisen: thou hast been urged

50

Thereby, in heat of anger, to address

Some words most unaccountable, in writing [page 281:]

To me, Castiglione; the bearer being

Baldazzar, Duke of Surrey. I am aware

Of nothing which might warrant thee in this thing,

[[v]]

55

Having given thee no offence. Ha! — am I right?

'Twas a mistake? — undoubtedly — we all

[[n]]

Do err at times.

POLITIAN. Draw, villain, and prate no more!

[[y]]

CASTIGLIONE. Ha! — draw? — and villain? have at thee then at once,

Proud Earl! (*draws.*)

POLITIAN (*drawing.*) Thus to the expiatory tomb,

60

Untimely sepulchre, I do devote thee

In the name of Lalage!

[[y]]

CASTIGLIONE (*letting fall his sword and recoiling to the extremity of the stage.*)

Of Lalage!

Hold off — thy sacred hand! — avaunt I say!

Avaunt — I will not fight thee — indeed I dare not.

POLITIAN. Thou wilt not fight with me didst say, Sir Count?

[[y]]

65

Shall I be baffled thus? — now this is well;

Didst say thou *darest* not? Ha!

CASTIGLIONE. I dare not — dare not —

Hold off thy hand — with that beloved name

So fresh upon thy lips I will not fight thee —

I cannot — dare not.

POLITIAN. Now by my halidom

[[y]]

70

I do believe thee! — coward, I do believe thee!

CASTIGLIONE. Ha! — coward! — this may not be!

(clutches his sword and staggers toward POLITIAN, but his purpose is changed before reaching him, and he falls upon his knee at the feet of the Earl.)

[[v]]

Alas! my lord, [page 282:]

It is — it is — most true. In such a cause

[[v]]

I am the veriest coward. O pity me!

[[n]]

POLITIAN *(greatly softened.)* Alas! — I do — indeed I pity thee.

CASTIGLIONE. And Lalage —

[[n]]

75

POLITIAN. *Scoundrel! — arise and die!*

CASTIGLIONE. It needeth not be — thus — thus — O let me die

Thus on my bended knee. It were most fitting

That in this deep humiliation I perish.

For in the fight I will not raise a hand

80

Against thee, Earl of Leicester. Strike thou home —

(baring his bosom.)

Here is no let or hindrance to thy weapon —

Strike home. I *will not* fight thee.

POLITIAN. Now s'Death and Hell!

Am I not — am I not sorely — grievously tempted

To take thee at thy word? But mark me, sir!

85

Think not to fly me thus. Do thou prepare

For public insult in the streets — before

The eyes of the citizens. I'll follow thee —
Like an avenging spirit I'll follow thee
Even unto death. Before those whom thou lovest —

90

Before all Rome I'll taunt thee, villain, — I'll taunt thee,
Dost hear? with *cowardice* — thou *wilt not* fight me?
Thou liest! thou *shalt!* (*exit.*)

[[y]]

CASTIGLIONE. Now this indeed is just!

Most righteous, and most just, avenging Heaven!

[page 282, continued:]

[[y]]

[[n]]

X. [A]

[*The Hall of Di Broglio's Palace. UGO and SAN OZZO.*]

[UGO -----]

[[n]]

SAN OZZO. D—d if he does that's flat! why — yes, that's flat. [page 283:]

Extremely flat, and candid, and so forth

50

And sociable, and all that kind of thing
Damned if you do? — look you, you ignoramus
What is it you mean? is it your fixed intention
To lie all day in that especial manner
If so pray let me know!

UGO. I'll let you know

55

Nothing about it, and for the best of reasons
In the first place, Sir, I did not hear a word
Your honour said, and in the second, Sir,

[[n]]

I cannot talk at all. It's very strange
You can't perceive I'm dead!

SAN OZZO. It's very strange

60

I can't perceive you're dead? soho! I see!
(*aside*) I've heard before that such ideas as these
Have seized on human brains, still not believing
The matter possible. Ha! ha! I have it!
I wish to see the Count — he'll not admit me —

65

Being in the dumps about this little matter
Touching Politian, who in the public streets
Called him a coward on yesterday forenoon,
Set him a laughing once, and he'll forget
Both the Earl and himself. I'd bet a trifle now

70

I'll make this idiot go and tell the Count
That he's deceased — if so the game is up.
(*aloud*) So — so — you're dead eh? come now — come now, Ugo!
Be candid with me — is it indeed a fact
And are you really dead?

UGO. Not, Sir, exactly

75

Dead, so to say, but having just committed
Felo de se, I'm what they call deceased.

SAN OZZO. Ah! I perceive — it's positively so [page 284:]

Poor soul he's gone! But now I think of it
Deceased is not the word. What say you, Ugo?

80

Deceased is not the proper word to express
Your case with due exactitude. Perhaps

Defunct would suit it better.

UGO. Sir! — I'm defunct.

SAN OZZO. Ah — very well! — then I shall tell your master

That you're defunct — or stop suppose I say —

85

I think there would be more of dignity

In saying "Sir Count, your worthy servant Ugo

Not being dead, nor yet to say deceased,

Nor yet defunct, but having unluckily

Made way with himself — that's felo de se you know —

90

Hath now departed this life."

UGO. Say that, Sir, say that!

For now, upon consideration, I think

I have — departed this life.

SAN OZZO. I will — I'll say it!

I will inform the Count — but not so fast —

I'm wrong — I must not do it — it were against

95

All rules of etiquette. This is a matter

Demanding due consideration, Ugo,

One of the last importance. Do you not think

(You see I yield unto your better judgment)

Do you not think it were more fitting, Sir,

100

More decorous, you know, — you understand me?

More delicate, more proper, and all that —

That you should tell the circumstance yourself

Unto the Count — ha! — do you take me Sir!

'Tis the better plan, is it not?

UGO. Why yes, it is.

105

SAN OZZO. Undoubtedly — it is — you are right — get up!

And lose no time about it — be quick — get up!

UGO. Get up? I can't — Sir, I've been dead an hour

And am stiff as you perceive.

SAN OZZO. Well, yes, I do.

You are a little — stiff — all very true. [page 285:]

110

I most sincerely pity you — but, Sir,

Could you not, think you, by a desperate effort,

Contrive to stir a little? let me help you?

[[n]]

Paugh! this will never do! — why, bless me, Sir,

Perhaps you're not aware that — that — in short

[[n]]

115

The day is very sultry — and that a corpse

In very hot weather won't — keep, you take me, Sir?

My nose is delicate, and to be plain

You smell, Sir, yes you smell — come now be quick!

Indeed I cannot will not answer for

120

The consequence of any longer stay

Sir, you may drop to pieces!

UGO. Good God! that's true!

Lend me your hand, Sir, do!

SAN OZZO. Ah that is well!

Extremely well attempted! — Sir I am glad

To see you on your legs, — a little stiff

125

No matter! — not ungraceful in a corpse.
Now Sir, this leg — a little farther — that's it!
Most excellent! — ah! that is exquisite!
Now Sir the left — you have a genius, Ugo,
For putting out a leg! Pray Sir proceed!

130

Superlative! — now that's what I call walking!
Magnificent! — a little farther, Sir!
Farewell! — now recollect you tell
The Count as I directed — you've departed
This life — you're dead, deceased, defunct,

135

And all that sort of thing — ha! ha! ha! ha!

[page 285, continued:]

[[v]]

XI. [A]

Interior of the Coliseum. POLITIAN entering from behind — moonlight.

[[u]]

POLITIAN. Shall meet me here within the Coliseum! [page 286:]

[[v]]

Type of the antique Rome — rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!

5

At length at length after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage, and burning thirst
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie)
I stand, an altered and an humble man
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within

10

My very soul thy grandeur, gloom and glory!
She comes not, and the spirit of the place

[[v]]

Oppresses me!
Vastness and Age and Memories of Eld
Silence and Desolation and dim Night

15

Gaunt vestibules, and phantom-peopled aisles
I feel ye now — I feel ye in your strength!
O spells more sure than e'er Judæan king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane
O spells more potent than the rapt Chaldee

20

Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!
She comes not and the moon is high in Heaven!
Here where a hero fell, a column falls

[[v]]

Here where the mimic eagle glared in gold
A secret vigil holds the swarthy bat

25

Here where the dames of Rome their yellow hair
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle:
Here where on ivory couch the Cæsar sate
On bed of moss lies gloating the foul adder:
Here where on golden throne the monarch lolled

30

Glides spectre-like unto his marble home
Lit by the wan light of the horned moon
The swift and silent lizard of the stones.
These crumbling walls — these tottering arcades
These mouldering plinths — these sad and blackened shafts

35

These vague entablatures: this broken frieze [page 287:]
These shattered cornices, this wreck, this ruin,
These stones, alas! these grey stones are they all
All of the great and the colossal left
By the corrosive hours to Fate and me?

40

Not all the echoes answer me — not all:
Prophetic sounds and loud arise forever
From us and from all ruin unto the wise,

[[y]]

As from the granite Memnon to the sun.
We rule the hearts of mightiest men: we rule

45

With a despotic sway all giant minds.
We are not desolate we pallid stones,
Not all our power is gone — not all our Fame
Not all the magic of our high renown
Not all the wonder that encircles us

50

Not all the mysteries that in us lie
Not all the memories that hang upon
And cling around about us as a garment
Clothing its in a robe of more than glory.

[[n]]

(Enter LALANGE wildly).

She comes.

[LALANGE.] I come. And now the hour is come

[[y]]

55

For vengeance or will never. So! the priest

[[n]]

Is standing by the altar — the robed priest!
And by him the bride — so beautiful — the bride
And in a bride's array! and by the bride

[[y]]

The bridegroom — where art thou?

[POLITIAN.] 'Tis true where am I?

60

Not where I should be? — By the God of Heaven

[\[\[v\]\]](#)

[\[\[n\]\]](#)

I'll mar this bridal if at the altar's foot

The bridegroom dies. (*Exit*)

[LALANGE.] Away — Away — farewell!

[\[\[v\]\]](#)

[\[\[n\]\]](#)

Farewell Castiglione and farewell

My hope in Heaven! (*Exit*)

[1835]

VARIANTS

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 247:]

Title: *Above scene IV, the first to be published, Poe wrote in the manuscript: Scenes from Politian, An Unpublished Drama, by Edgar A. Poe. But in B there was printed: Scenes from an Unpublished Drama, by Edgar A. Poe. In D the title is: Scenes from "Politian;" an Unpublished Drama.*

Cast: *After the word orphan the manuscript has (canceled) of illustrious family, last of her race, and; after San Ozzo canceled a; and after Politian canceled a young and noble Roman.*

[The following variant appears at the bottom of page 248:]

Heading: Act I, Scene I (A)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 249:]

[49](#) (Jacinta tells me this) / *Originally the passage was longer:*

(Jacinta tells me this) and listens aghast

To the frightful sounds of merriment below

Which she must never more share in. (Ax)

[49](#) Ah (A2v)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 251:]

[83](#) Here! / Here! here! (Ax)

[86b](#) Look *written over an illegible word* (Ax)

[94](#) gone / going (Ax)

[98](#) this (A2v)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 252:]

[112](#) my mistress / the lady (Ax)

Heading: Scene 2d (A)

[The following variant appears at the bottom of page 255:]

80 Pshaw! (A2v)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 256:]

104 *Before this I say is deleted* (Ax)

107 *Before this line Ugo is deleted* (Ax)

108 that / that there (Ax)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 257:]

113 it / it — and I (Ax)

117 *The second I've is inserted* (A2v)

Heading: Scene 3rd (Ax); Act 2d Sc. 1st (A); I. of the second installment (B); I. (D). In both B and D the place Rome is given, but it is needless in the complete play.

2 *Followed by a line: Oh! I am very happy! — sad? — not I* (A)

4 *Direction at end of line (sighs heavily)* (A)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 258:]

23 Thou wilt — thou / Thou (A, B); more / somewhat more (A2x)

24 dress and equipage / habiliments (Ax)

26 I'll / I will (Ax)

31 gentle / gentle humble (Ax)

35 thy / your (Ax)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 259:]

39 I' / In (A); Castiglione *is followed by* you dog (Ax)

40 You dog / Kiss her (Ax)

46 A man quite / Politian's (Ax)

47 fame / reputation (Ax); have not seen / never saw (A)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 260:]

Heading: *This was first headed Act 2nd Scene 1st, then Scene 4th (Ax), then Scene 3rd (A). It is numbered I of the first installment (B), and II (D). In B and D the place Rome is given, but this was deleted in E.*

Directions: with ... garden (A2v); Jacinta (a servant maid) / Jacinta (A, C); upon / upon the back of (A); on the back of (C)

1-4 *and 4 lines of directions omitted* (C)

4 'Tis / It's (A)

5 *Direction before this line: Lalage reading.* (C)

6 *Direction: and / and then* (C)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 261:]

14 Again / La! again (Ax)

15 beyond the sea / in Albion (Ax)

[16](#) one (A2v); in / i' (C)

[20](#) Here's / This is (Ax)

[24-111](#) now missing from A

[27](#) (second part) not included in C

[28-55](#) not included in C

[The following variant appears at the bottom of page 262:]

[56](#) In C the preceding direction reads: (Jacinta finally in a discussion about certain jewels, insults her mistress who bursts into tears.)

[The following variant appears at the bottom of page 263:]

[76](#) In C the direction is placed at the end of the line.

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 264:]

[99](#) This sacred / A vow — a (B); A pious (C)

[106](#) In C the direction is placed after the end of Lalage's speech in line 107.

Heading: The beginning of this scene is lost with the fifth leaf of the manuscript. It is estimated that from twenty to thirty lines are now missing.

[The following variant appears at the bottom of page 265:]

[7](#) What of it / decidedly (Ax)

[The following variant appears at the bottom of page 266:]

[39](#) itself / himself (Ax)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 267:]

[68](#) me / me very much (Ax)

Heading: Scene 2nd (Ax); Scene 3rd (A); II of the first installment (B); III (D).

Directions: An apt. in the Palace. Politian and Baldazzar (A); ROME. An apartment in a palace. Politian and Baldazzar, his friend. (B)

[6](#) Surely / I live — (A, B)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 269:]

[57](#) that eloquent / that voice — that (A, B)

[58](#) Surely I / I surely (A, B); were / had been (Ax)

[62](#) which you may see / this way you can see it (Ax)

[63](#) it / that lattice (A, B)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 270:]

[79](#) Since Poe avoided imperfect lines, the first line of the song is counted as part of line 79.

[79-115](#) Originally the scene ended more briefly; Poe pasted a piece of paper over the earlier shorter ending, and proceeded with an expanded version, before beginning Scene VII. The canceled passage reads:

'Tis hush'd and all is still!

Pol: What didst thou say?

That all is still? Alas, all is not still!

Bal. Let us go down — for it is getting late
And they wait for us below — Politian give
These fancies to the winds. Remember, pray
Your bearing lately savoured much of rudeness
Unto the Duke — Arouse thee! and remember! Exit.

Pol: Remember. I do — I do — lead on! — remember! (Ax)

[The following variant appears at the bottom of page 271:]

[100](#) Believe me / Baldazzar! Oh (A, B)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 272:]

Heading: *This was headed Act 3rd Sc. [3d] in A; the number of the scene is now obliterated in the manuscript but may be restored from “Scene 3d” originally written at the bottom of the preceding leaf, before Poe made the preceding scene longer. The scene is numbered III of the first installment in B, and IV in D.*

Directions: Lalage and Politian *not* in A.

[5](#) sob / weep (A, B)

[6](#) mourn / weep (A, B)

[9](#) — turn here thine eyes / and listen to *me!* (A, B)

[16](#) knee / bosom (Ax)

[20](#) spirit / soul (A); love / love thee (A)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 273:]

[30](#) to me / — speak not (A, B)

[54](#) figure / spectre (Ax)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 274:]

[58](#) Stirred / Moved (Ax)

[60](#) turn so pale / tremble thus (Ax)

[63](#) boughs / bowers (A)

[64](#) gloom / shade (Ax)

[65](#) speakest / spokest (A)

[66](#) With which all tongues are busy / of which all tongues are speaking (A)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 275:]

Heading: Sc.2d (Ax); Act 4th Sc. 1 (A).

Directions: near a / near the (Ax)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 276:]

[3](#) o no! *preceded by* (turns back the watch (A2x)

[14](#) [*directions*] nonchalance *canceled* (A2x) *but retained here since nothing was substituted.*

[24](#) instance / example (Ax)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 277:]

[38](#) these / them (Ax)

[41](#) [Took] *canceled* (A2x) but retained here since nothing was substituted.

[54](#) — ten yards / — ten yards of velvet (A2x)

[The following variant appears at the bottom of page 278:]

[83](#) so / thus (Ax)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 279:]

Heading: Scene 3rd (Ax); 2 (A); II of the second installment (B); V (D)

Directions: alone / solus (A)

[7](#) In / I' (A); Paradisal Hope! / hopes — give me to live, (A, B)

[The following variant appears at the bottom of page 280:]

[44](#) After this A and B add:

If that we meet at all, it were as well

That I should meet him in the Vatican —

In the Vatican — within the holy walls

Of the Vatican.

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 281:]

[55-93](#) Now missing (A)

[58](#) then at once / — have at thee then (B)

[61](#) [Directions] *letting fall* / *dropping* (B)

[62](#) thy sacred / hold off thy (B)

[63](#) indeed I dare not / I dare not — dare not (B)

[65](#) After this B has another line: Exceeding well! — thou dardest not fight with me?

[70](#) After this B adds a short line: Thou dardest not!

[71](#) my lord / alas! (B)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 282:]

[73](#) the veriest / — I am — a (B)

[92](#) indeed / — now this (B)

[The following variant appears at the bottom of page 283, running to the bottom of page 283:]

Heading: The opening of Scene X is now lost with the antepenultimate leaf of Poe's [page 283:] manuscript. At the end of the scene Poe wrote 135 which (from a similar notation at the end of the scene that follows it) I judge to be the number of lines of verse it contained when complete. The missing lines must have numbered forty-seven, of which the last contained the phrase of Ugo, That's flat uttered with a curse. No changes occur in the surviving lines.

[The following variant appears at the bottom of page 285:]

Heading: Scene XI is headed Scene 3rd (A), and has, added by Poe, at the end, the numeral 64 which is the number of lines counted metrically and not the lines required in printing.

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 286:]

[2-53](#) For variants of “*The Coliseum*” as a separate poem see pp. 229-230.

[12](#) me! / me! with awe. Ye Memories! (Ax)

[23](#) After this line was first written line 28 (Ax)

[The following variants appear at the bottom of page 287:]

[43](#) from the / written over an erasure now illegible (A)

[55](#) So! / written above Behold (Ax)

[59](#) where art thou? / gets this night hence! (Ax)

[61](#) bridal / wedding (Ax)

[63](#) Castiglione [apparently written Castiglioni but not certainly so (A) ; hence the correct form is printed.]

[page 288:]

NOTES

[Stage directions](#): I added “16th” in the edition of 1923. Poe left the century blank, being apparently uncertain about just what year should be chosen. It has been objected that Lalage’s reading is anachronistic, but the play is certainly not laid in the nineteenth century, and Lalage quotes something first published in 1822! The one remark in the play that to an attentive member of an audience would suggest a date for the action is Lalage’s reference, in VII, 67, to the recent discovery of America. Very late fifteenth century might be preferred, but it seems to me better to retain the date used in the first edition.

[Cast of Characters](#): The characters in Poe’s play are given names that might have been borne in Renaissance Italy, but it is easier to say for whom they are named than why those names were chosen. None of the names is appropriate in any high degree; Poe merely took most of them from some not yet identified book on the history and literature of the Renaissance, which he also used in his “Pinakidia,” and the rest are merely fancy names.

[Lalage](#) is best known as the name given by Horace to a fair lady in *Odes*, I, xxii. She is sung by the poet in the famous “Integer vitae,” when the wolf fled from him in the Sabine forest, as “dulce ridentem” and “dulce loquentem.” Poe’s Lalage speaks — at any rate she sings — beautifully, but smiles little in the play. She represents Ann Cook, who in her *Letters*, p. 27, wrote of the loss of her father and brothers. Quinn, *Edgar Allan Poe*, p. 233, says that Poe’s “Lalage is ... hopeless; her humility ... and her constant weeping ... remove her from sympathy.”

[Alessandra](#) is named for Alessandra di Bartolomeo Scala, famed for her beauty and learning. She preferred to the Italian Politian as a suitor another scholar, Michael Marullus (of Greek origin), and thus caused enmity between the two men. After her husband’s death in 1500, she entered a convent, and died in 1506. See Poe’s “Pinakidia,” number 140, and the notes on “To One in Paradise,” line 5, for an epigram Politian addressed to her before her marriage. In Poe’s play, Alessandra represents Miss Eliza T. Scott, who became Mrs. Sharp, in the real Kentucky tragedy. In the epigram mentioned, Politian calls Alessandra “cold maid,” but Poe’s character and the real ladies have little else in common.

[Jacinta](#) has a name derived from Poe’s favorite flower, the hyacinth. It is borne by a maidservant in “Slawkenbergius’s Tale” in Lawrence Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*, book IV. “Jacinta” is the title of a poem by William Rufus of Charleston, in *Rufiana* (1826), pp. 49-51; another poem in that book may be a source for Poe’s poem “The Sleeper.” The character has no counterpart in the real story.

[The Duke di Broglio](#) is almost surely named for the famous French ducal family of de Broglie, which was of Italian descent and originally called Broglio. A “Neapolitan Duke di Broglio” is a character in Poe’s tale “William Wilson.” Di Broglio has no counterpart in the Kentucky story.

[Baldassare Castiglione](#) (1478-1529), author of *The Courtier* (1528), was a friend of the real Politian, and is mentioned in “Pinakidia,” number 44, and “Marginalia,” number 60. He gives his two names to two of Poe’s characters. [page 289:] Castiglione in the play represents Colonel Sharp in the real story. Poe treats his character with compassion (unlike other writers of works based on the Kentucky killing), and this is the one most original and interesting aspect of the play. A good actor, I think, could make much of the part, but it is not an easy one.

[San Ozzo](#) (we learn later he is a count) is a common Tuscan diminutive or nickname, usually written as one word. He is purely

imaginary, and an amusing fellow — his is a good part for a comedian.

[Politian's](#) name is that of an important Italian scholar and poet, born Angelo Ambrogini at Montepulciano in Tuscany in 1454 and called, from his birthplace, Politianus or Poliziano (anglicized as Politian). He was noted for his work on ancient Greek and Latin authors, and wrote some poetry in “the vulgar tongue.” Poe says a beautiful passage in Politian’s *Orfeo* inspired his own poem “To One in Paradise.” His life was quiet; a professor who was the master of many professors, avoiding politics, he never married. Poetry and his love for Alessandra aside, little of the romantic hero is told of him save that grief for the death of his patron, Lorenzo the Magnificent, is supposed to have hastened his own end in 1494. He had nothing, save perhaps a taste for composing verses, in common with the violent Jereboam Beauchamp of Kentucky, whom Politian in Poe’s play represents. His English title is from that of Robert Dudley, favorite of Queen Elizabeth, patron of Spenser, and a leading character in Scott’s *Kenilworth* (1821).

[Baldazzar](#) takes his name from the given name of [Baldassare Castiglione, discussed above](#). He is an imaginary figure. His English title is from that of the Tudor poet, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey.

[Ugo](#) may have been named for Ugo Foscolo (1778-1827), the Italian author long resident in England, whom Killis Campbell — so he told me — considered the best-known Ugo in Poe’s day. Campbell also felt that Benito and Rupert are too commonplace for us to seek for namesakes; Campbell’s earlier comments and mine are withdrawn.

[The Monk](#) is given no personal name in the play. He has a remote counterpart in the real story, for Ann Cook’s correspondent, “Mrs. Ellen R——n,” remonstrated against the vengeful ideas of her friend in Kentucky.

There have been, of course, those who have sought something of Poe’s personality in the characters of his play. Their efforts seem to me fruitless. (See my thesis, p. 61. William Little Hughes said something of this in his *Contes inédits d’Edgar Poe*, 1862, p. 263, in a note on his translation, the first in French, of the scenes from *Politian* Poe printed. There is more in Emile Lauvrière, *Edgar Poe*, 1904, p. 370, where Sharp and Beauchamp are mentioned in a footnote.) Admitted that “Politian is a melancholy man,” by which the author makes it clear he means one of varying moods, and that Poe often chose such men as his protagonists, for he was such a person himself. Admitted that “most men are sadly altered when they’re drunk” may apply to the author as well as to his Castiglione. But to find much more of the author is to ignore his source in a true story of real people from a background wholly different from Poe’s, or even from that of anyone he probably ever knew. They are of the Kentucky frontier in the first decades of the nineteenth century, true children of that “dark and bloody ground.” They were [page 290:] not without culture; both Beauchamp and his wife wrote Byronic poetry. But they lived amid scenes of violence. Duels to the death and bloody brawls were of constant occurrence, and unbridled passions were familiar to all.

[Scene I](#)

[1ff.](#) The opening conversation between the servants is extremely conventional. Poe commenting on Mrs. Mowatt’s new comedy, *Fashion*, in the *Broadway Journal*, March 29, 1845, said: “The *dénouement* should in all cases be full of *action* and nothing else. Whatever cannot be explained by such action should be communicated at the opening of the play.”

[8](#) A buffo-singer is here a singer of burlesque songs.

[43](#) Compare William Chamberlayne’s *Love’s Victory*, I, 273: “Yet though the grief sits heavy on our souls.” This play, printed in 1658 and reprinted with the same author’s *Pharronida* in 1820, Poe seems to have known, for his motto for “William Wilson” is remotely borrowed from it.

[43-44](#) Possibly a reminiscence of Vergil’s *Aeneid*, VI, 100-101: “*ea frena furenti / concutit et stimulos sub pectore vertit Apollo*,” which may be translated, “Apollo shakes the reins on the inspired one, and turns the goad ’neath her heart.”

[47ff.](#) Compare two passages from Beauchamp’s *Confession*, pp. 9, 10, about Miss Cook: “She sternly refused to make any acquaintances or even to receive the society or visits of her former acquaintances ... and she said she could never be happy in society again.”

[49](#) In the canceled passage (see [variants, p. 249, above](#)) there occurs what may be Poe’s first use of “nevermore.”

[53-54](#) Miss Cook wrote after her betrayal, in *Letters*, p. 60, of suffering “my heart to be irrecoverably lost and blighted by one so little to be trusted — so little worthy of my affections. But whom I yet love.”

[67](#) This is condensed from Proverbs 16:18: “Pride goeth ... before a fall.”

[97, 99](#) Ugo’s two brief speeches are prose, not parts of the metric lines.

[105](#) The zecchin, zecchino, or sequin was a gold coin first minted at Venice under the Doge Giovanni Dandolo between 1280 and 1289 and issued there and elsewhere in Italy down to the last century. The value was about twelve gold francs.

[Scene II](#)

[30](#) “Between you and I” may be intentional because San Ozzo is a “fellow low-born.” Poe in “Epimanes,” the early form of “Four Beasts in One,” wrote “like you and I,” but later corrected that vulgarism.

[33](#) “Birds of a feather” usually connotes bad companions and is traced to the seventeenth century.

[38](#) Compare Beaumont and Fletcher’s *Maid’s Tragedy*, I, ii, 70f.: “You do me wrong, / A most unmanly wrong.” [page 291:]

[74](#) In “The Fall of the House of Usher,” Poe writes of “The Usher race, all time-honored as it was.”

[75-80](#) See *King John*, III, i, 316, “His honor; O, thine honor, Lewis, thine honor!”

[90](#) “Salermo” is clear in the manuscript, but Poe must refer to Salerno, an Italian city famed for its wine.

[119](#) To “crack a bottle” is Shakespearean; see *King Henry the Fourth*, Part II, V, iii, 66: “you’ll crack a quart together.”

Scene III

[23ff.](#) The similarity to the speech of advice to Laertes from Polonius in *Hamlet*, I, iii, is perhaps not accidental.

[35-36](#) Note a similar clash of “thou” and “you” in Scene VI, 97-98.

[45ff.](#) Poe’s Politian has much in common with the hero of his story “The Assignation,” who was also an Englishman, wealthy, of “unexpected eccentricity of ... address and manner,” and known for the rapid change of his moods, like Byron.

[54-55](#) The heroine of Poe’s story “Ligeia” had mastered “the most abstruse of the boasted erudition of the Academy” and had “traversed, and successfully, *all* the wide areas of moral, physical, and mathematical science.”

[67](#) The line is identical with the last of scene V.

Scene IV

It was from this scene that Poe thought he found “plagiarisms” in Act II, scene iv, of Longfellow’s play *The Spanish Student*, which had appeared serially in *Graham’s Magazine* late in 1842 and in book form in 1843. In the *Broadway Journal*, March 29, 1845, Poe printed what he called “parallel passages,” those from *Politian* taken from the manuscript and not from the published text of the *Southern Literary Messenger* (1835), as is clear from the variants.

[4](#) There is another reference to Lalage’s humility in Scene VIII, 31.

[5-6](#) Lalage reads (slightly inaccurately) from Milton’s *Comus*, lines 632-633.

[7-9](#) Lalage quotes these lines from an English version of Homer’s *Odyssey*, IV, 566-568, which Poe presumably found in “Introduction to the Odyssey” in Henry Nelson Coleridge’s *Introductions to ... the Greek Classic Poets* (London, 1830), where they are ascribed to the pen of Abraham Moore in a note in his *Odes of Pindar* (London, 1822), Part I, p. 27. Coleridge discusses the Elysian plain as the abode of the dead, writes of the “Christian turn” given by Milton to the fable, and quotes the lines from *Comus* cited above as read by Lalage. See “Poe and H. N. Coleridge’s *Greek Classic Poets*” by Palmer C. Holt, *American Literature*, March 1962. Apparently Poe’s heroine thinks about Elysium as Heaven, and is almost on the verge of redemption under the benign influence of H. N. Coleridge, read anachronistically. Ironically, however, she soon chooses a path of unholy vengeance. [page 292:]

[14-19](#) Lalage reads, slightly inaccurately, from John Webster’s *Duchess of Malfi*, IV, ii, 264-265. Poe slips in writing of this “dame beyond the sea,” for the scene of his own play is laid in Italy.

[20-26](#) The sterner story is obviously that of Cleopatra, probably in Dryden’s *All for Love*, V, 290ff., rather than in Shakespeare. In the introductory letter to his *Poems* (1831) Poe quotes from the prologue to Dryden’s play. The names of Cleopatra’s handmaidens are historical; they are given by Plutarch in his “Antony,” lxxxv, 4. Dryden, like Plutarch, uses the form “Charmion.” Poe’s exact source for his spelling “eios” is unknown. He used the two names again in the title of his tale “The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion,” in 1839.

[27](#) The meanings Poe gives of the names are somewhat fanciful. Iris means rainbow, but *eiros* is wool; Charmion seems rather to be connected with joy, grace, or charm than with “dove.”

[30-31](#) The “balm of Gilead,” from Jeremiah 8:22, is mentioned again in [“The Raven,” line 89.](#)

[33-34](#) Lalage quotes from George Peele’s *David and Bethsabe* (1599), lines 46-47; Poe repeats the quotation in his “To Marie Louise,” about 1847. The passage is based on Psalm 133:3.

[57](#) The story of the viper is from Aesop, but Poe here may echo Dryden's *All for Love*, IV, 467-469:

... you serpents,

Whom I have in my kindly bosom warmed

Till I am stung to death.

[66](#) Compare "A Dream," line 2, and see my notes, for "joy departed." Poe is careless of angelic ranks; he makes Hope an angel in *Politian*, VII, 81, and a cherub in "The Premature Burial."

[67](#) Compare "[To Zante](#)" for "[entombéd hopes](#)."

[73](#) The Monk reflects a remark of the "Mrs. Ellen R——n," to whom Ann Cook's *Letters* were addressed; at p. 37 of the pamphlet she says: "I begged her to consult her Bible; for in that alone she would find happiness and peace; and to struggle to subdue her violent passions, which might yet lead her into the commission of dreadful errors."

[77](#) The line is close to one in the canceled passage after *Politian*, I, 49, "To the frightful sounds of merriment below."

[83-86](#) Beauchamp in his *Confession*, p. 99, says that Ann Cook's "father, brothers and friends, by a most strange succession of calamities had been swept into the grave." Poe used the phrase "the rivulet that ran by the very door" again in a letter of October 18, 1848, to Helen Whitman.

[106ff.](#) The use of a dagger as a cross recalls the action of Hamlet when he sees the Ghost and holds out his reversed sword as a cross.

[107-108](#) Compare *King John*, III, iv, 43-44:

Pandulph. Lady, you utter madness, and not sorrow.

Constance. Thou art not holy to belie me so.

[page 293:]

[111](#) Lalage does not swear her own death but that of Castiglione.

[Scene V](#)

[1ff.](#) The lost opening of this scene seems to have been of a serious kind.

[36](#) Compare *Hamlet*, V, i, 210: "your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar."

[40](#) Compare with this *Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, i, 2: "More strange than true."

[78](#) This line is the same as the last line of the third scene of Poe's play.

[Scene VI](#)

Henry W. Wells told me he thought Poe may have had in mind the end of the first scene of Dryden's *All for Love*, where Ventidius urges Antony to activity.

[21](#) Compare "Murders in the Rue Morgue": "we then busied our souls in dreams" and "Colloquy of Monos and Una": "we wrapped our spirits, daily, in dreams."

[22](#) Killis Campbell (*Poems*, p. 232) compared the beginning of Moore's poem "Go Where Glory Waits Thee."

[23](#) The expression "trumpet-tongued," Campbell points out (*Poems*, p. 232), appears in *Macbeth*, I, vii, 19. Poe used it also in "The Imp of the Perverse" and in his [sketch of Caroline Kirkland in Godey's for August 1846](#).

[24](#) Roderick Usher, in "The Fall of the House of Usher," was "listening to some imaginary sound," and in "The Assigination" the protagonist "seemed to be listening to sounds which must have had existence in his imagination alone."

[25](#) Sarah Helen Whitman used the second half of this line, together with lines 56-57, as a motto for her poem "The Phantom Voice," which concerns Poe. The poem first appeared in *Graham's Magazine* for January 1850 (36:91) and is collected in all editions of her poems.

[29](#) Compare the opening of "The Pit and the Pendulum": "I was sick — sick unto death with that long agony."

[31](#) “Bear with me” is said by Mark Antony in *Julius Caesar*, III, ii, 110.

[34](#) Eternal City (*Urbs Aeterna*) as a name for Rome is first found in Tibullus, II, v, 23, and in Ovid’s *Fasti*, III, 72, but is a commonplace since ancient times.

[40](#) Compare “when the winds are breathing low” in Shelley’s “Indian Serenade,” which Poe quoted in “The Poetic Principle.” See also “The City in the Sea,” line 49: “The hours are breathing faint and low.”

[41](#) Opportunity “took for a cravat an hour-glass with golden grains” in “The Palace of Love,” in *The Visions of Quevedo*, translated by William Elliott (Philadelphia, 1832), p. 73. I once saw a copy of this little book supposed to have belonged to Poe, and I believe that it probably influenced a passage in his tale “Bon-Bon.” For Poe’s other references to the sands of [page 294:] time as golden, see [“To ———” \(“Sleep on”\), line 15](#), and [“A Dream Within a Dream,” lines 14-15](#). A close parallel in Tennyson’s “Locksley Hall” (1842), lines 31-32, must be fortuitous.

[55](#) The phrase “oppressed me as a spell” is found in Poe’s tale “Morella.”

[57](#) In *Hamlet*, III, ii, 78, there is the phrase “heart of heart.” Poe has “heart of hearts” also in [Politian, VII, 51](#); in [“To my Mother,”](#) in the tale “Landor’s Cottage,” and in a letter he wrote to Mrs. Whitman, October 1, 1848.

[60-69](#) Judge Beverley Tucker wrote to Thomas W. White, proprietor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, on November 29, 1835, complaining of the irregularity of the meter in Poe’s play. The letter was shown to Poe, who on [December first wrote Tucker](#) that the “dischords” (resolved feet) were intentional, the result of careful study of prosody in several languages, and especially of the poems of Thomas Moore and the later works of Alexander Pope. Said Poe, “I especially pride myself on the accuracy of my ear.” This did not silence Judge Tucker, who cited this speech of Baldazzar, in a [letter to Poe of December fifth](#), as “lines that cannot by any reading be forced into time.” Few, now, will agree with the judge’s objections.

[70ff.](#) Lalage’s song is from the second stanza of “A Suit to His Unkind Mistress Not to Forsake Him,” by the Tudor poet, Sir Thomas Wyatt, who died in 1542. Wyatt’s poetry is often printed together with that of his contemporary, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, from whom Poe’s Baldazzar takes part of his title.

[97-98](#) As in III, 35-36, “your” and “thee” clash.

[103-104](#) The passage has no quotation marks in the manuscript and in the *Southern Literary Messenger*; it may well be rather a reminiscence than a direct quotation. No satisfactory source has been suggested.

[Scene VII](#)

This scene is largely founded on fact. Compare the following from Ann Cook’s *Letters*, pp. 74-75:

“I felt myself driven from society, and an object of scorn and derision ... He offered me his hand. Yes, forlorn and abandoned as I was, he was willing to become my husband as he had been my friend. What could I do? I addressed him candidly and openly.

“‘You know my history,’ said I, ‘and my shame, if you are willing to receive to your bosom a poor outcast, whom the world has stigmatised as guilty and polluted, with a wounded heart and a blighted name, then take me. I am yours forever.’

“‘My dear Ann,’ he replied, ‘I regard you as the innocent victim of the most detestable treachery ... I have long admired the cultivation of your mind, and the proud dignity and elevation of your soul. You were calculated to grace the most elevated circles of society ... I am proud to be the object of your choice, humbled as you may be in your own estimation, or ... in that of an unfeeling world. I have never felt for any woman what [page 295:] I feel for you; my attachment is deep, sincere, and ardent, and while we live it shall never become extinct’ ...

“He had given me sufficient proofs of the truth of what he asserted.”

Confirmation of this is to be found in a statement “To the Public” signed by Mrs. Eliza T. Sharp, printed in the Frankfort *Argus*, March 22, 1826, and copied in other Kentucky newspapers of the time. Sharp’s wife there declared:

“Beauchamp married Miss Cook with a full knowledge of all the circumstances of her shame and of the charges which had been so widely circulated against my husband. It is said that he laughed at the delicacy of his family who would have dissuaded him from forming this connection, and ... evinced the most perfect indifference upon the subject of her character.”

[20f.](#) Compare Moore’s “Come rest in this bosom,” quoted in “The Poetic Principle” — “I know not, I ask not if guilt’s in that heart, / I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art” — and slightly misquoted in a letter to Mrs. Whitman on October 18, 1848.

[28](#) The phraseology recalls Poe’s [“Happiest Day,” line 2](#), and Byron’s “Fare thee well,” line 63: “Sear’d in heart, and lone, and blighted.”

[32](#) Poe here uses “ideal” in the unusual sense of “unreal.”

[38](#) Compare [“Tamerlane” \(H, 1845\), line 178](#): “... of all we hope in heaven.”

[43-45](#) See Job 7:9: “he that goeth down into the grave.”

[54-56](#) Compare “The Masque of the Red Death” for “this spectral image, which with a slow and solemn movement ... stalked to and fro,” and a canceled passage in “The Imp of the Perverse,” for “a vast and formless shadow ... with a ... stealthy pace.” In “William Wilson” there is mention of a “step slow and solemn.”

[57-63](#) Compare “The Tell-Tale Heart” for “It is nothing but the wind in the chimney,” and “The Raven” for “’Tis the wind and nothing more.” Killis Campbell (*Poems*, p. 233) remarks on [lines 21-22 of “Dreams”](#): “... the chilly wind / Came o’er me in the night.”

[63](#) Compare *As You Like It*, II, vii, 111: “Under the shade of melancholy boughs.”

[65](#) This is surely reminiscent of the opening line of Byron’s *Bride of Abydos*: “Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle,” which Poe chose to scan carefully in his essays, “Notes Upon English Verse” and “The Rationale of Verse.” Byron’s indebtedness to “Mignon’s Song” in Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister* is well known.

[67](#) The allusion is obviously to Columbus and is the most important bit of evidence that Poe wished to lay his scene not long after 1492.

[69](#) Compare [“To One in Paradise,” line 5](#): “All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers.”

[78](#) This is reminiscent of [Baldazzar’s reproach in VI, 4-5](#). [page 296:]

[78-79ff.](#) Here Poe is using material from the Lexington *Kentucky Reporter* of July 7, 1826, quoted in an appendix to the *Confession*, where Beauchamp’s dramatic farewell to his dying wife is thus described: “ ‘Farewell,’ said he, ‘child of sorrow — Farewell child of misfortune and persecution — you are now secure from the tongue of slander — for you I have lived; for you I die!’ ”

[83](#) Compare Poe’s [letter to Helen Whitman of October 18, 1848](#): “whom I love — by one at whose feet I knelt — I *still* kneel — in deeper worship than ever man offered to God.”

[100](#) Poe may here echo *King Lear*, II, iv, 22-23: “They durst not do’t; / They could not, would not do’t.”

[Scene VIII](#)

[18](#) Compare *The Tempest*, I, ii, 389: “Sitting on a bank.”

[41](#) “Took” in this construction is of course vulgar English, but Jacinta is a low character, and Poe probably wished her to use an incorrect phrase here, although he corrected another of her solecisms, “all them jewels,” [in line 38 above](#). In the manuscript Poe canceled the word but supplied no substitute.

[52](#) Genoa velvet was of excellent quality; Poe mentions it in “Bon-Bon,” in the third chapter of “The Journal of Julius Rodman,” and in “Landor’s Cottage.”

[77](#) The spelling “ideot” was tolerated in Poe’s day; in *The Yankee*, October 1829, there is an unsigned poem called “The Ideot-Boy,” in which both “ideot” and “idiot” occur several times.

[Scene IX](#)

[1](#) Compare *King Lear*, V, iii, 105, “My sickness grows upon me.”

[4](#) Azrael is the angel of death in Jewish and Mahometan lore; he is mentioned in the first version of “Metzengerstein,” in “Ligeia,” and in “Mesmeric Revelation.”

[38](#) Killis Campbell (*Poems*, p. 233) compared Addison’s *Cato*, IV, iv, “Plato, thou reasonest well.”

[57-93](#) Poe here follows rather closely Beauchamp’s description (in his *Confession*, pp. 15-17) of an encounter with Sharp;

“[Sharp said] ‘My friend ... I never can fight the friend of that worthy injured lady ... I never will raise my hand against you’ ...

“[I replied] ‘Now, sir, tell me, will you fight me a duel,’ (again raising my dagger.)

“He then stepped back a step, and I thought from the turn of his eye, was preparing to run. I sprang forward and caught him by the

breast of his coat, and said, 'Now you damned villain, you shall die.' He then fell upon his knees and said, 'My life is in your hands, my friend I beg my life' ... I then said, 'Get up, you coward, and go till I meet you in the street to-morrow ... go arm yourself, for to-morrow I shall horsewhip you in the streets, and repeat it daily till you fight me a duel ... You are about such a whining coward, as I was told you were ...' [page 297:]

"[Sharp replied] 'You are the favored possessor of that great and worthy woman's love? Be it so, then. Here take my life. I deserve it. But do not disgrace me in the streets ...'

"I bade him begone from me, or I would abide his offer in one moment (starting towards him.)"

[74](#) At page 124 of the *Confession* there are some verses by Beauchamp called "The Death Scene," from which I quote two lines, "I pause — but short as lightning's gleam / The flash of Pity through my soul."

[75](#) Describing the actual murder, in the *Confession*, p. 35, Beauchamp says, "I muttered in his face, 'Die, you villain.' "

[Scene X](#)

The macabre humor of this scene will please few readers, but good acting might make it tolerable.

[48-49](#) There are two meanings for "flat." Ugo means "That's final." San Ozzo plays on the other meaning, "stupid."

[58-63](#) Some people have, of course, fancied they were dead. It is said that King George III revealed his madness by talking to a courtier of having attended his own funeral.

[113](#) The word "Paugh" is clearly written in the manuscript; more usual forms are "pah," "poh," and "faugh."

[115-118](#) Compare "[Bon-Bon](#)," where the Devil says to the philosophic hero: "You must know that in a climate so sultry as mine ... after death, unless pickled immediately, (and a pickled spirit is *not* good), they will — smell — you understand, eh?"

[Scene XI](#)

[1-53](#) The author presumably chose the locale of this scene to permit his protagonist to deliver as a soliloquy Poe's own prize poem "The Coliseum," already slightly revised from the first version printed in 1833.

[54-62](#) The idea of killing the bridegroom at the altar may have been taken from the climax of Victor Hugo's sensational play *Hernani* (1830), where the hero, losing a duel, must wait until his enemy chooses to sound a horn and kill him. The horn sounds as Hernani is about to wed his sweetheart Elvira. There was much discussion of Hugo's play at the time, even in America; Poe later names it in "The Masque of the Red Death." A bloody struggle at an altar in St. Peter's concludes the second act of Byron's *Deformed Transformed* (1824), a play echoed by Poe in "Al Araaf."

[56](#) This line may echo *Paradise Regained*, I, 257: "Before the altar and the vested priest."

[61-62](#) Here Poe seems to recall something in Ann Cook's *Letters*, p. 84. That lady wrote on July 4, 1826: "I ... suggested that it would be better to plunge the dagger into his heart while folded in the arms of her for whom he deserted me." [page 298:]

[63-64](#) These last lines may be taken as an indication that Lalage (unlike her prototype in real life), repents although too late. I believe that Poe planned to have her rush between Politian and Castiglione, and herself be slain in a vain attempt to separate the two men in mortal combat. Poe did not write a final scene, and there really was nothing more to say. A playwright today might think the rest could be left to the imagination; a director might have the twelfth scene played in dumb-show.

[[Footnotes]]

[The following footnotes appear at the bottom of page 241:]

[1](#) For a probably unreliable story that Poe once had a sketch of a scenario of a tragedy to be worked out with Dr. R. Montgomery Bird, see Phillips, I, 835, citing Howard Paul in *Munsey's Magazine*, August 1892. Paul's statements are notoriously undependable.

[2](#) It had its *première* on January 19, 1933, when given by the Virginia Players at the University at Charlottesville, and was reviewed by James Southall Wilson in the college annual of the year, *Corks and Curls* (46:351). There were a few later performances elsewhere in Virginia.

[The following footnotes appear at the bottom of page 242:]

[3](#) Ingram published brief extracts in 1875 and 1888; a New York dealer printed a transcript of the last leaf in 1921.

[4](#) The edition was my doctoral dissertation, directed by William Peterfield Trent, but also read before publication by George Edward Woodberry, James Howard Whitty, and Killis Campbell.

[5](#) Both the original and a photocopy have been used; some minutiae are clearer in each than in the other.

[6](#) The name is pronounced “Beecham.” The historical basis of the play is mentioned briefly in Ingram’s *Edgar Allan Poe* (1880), I, 111. The biographer presumably learned of it from Mrs. Lewis, whose informant was probably Poe.

[The following footnotes appear at the bottom of page 243:]

[7](#) The stone is still to be seen. The text of the poem was first printed in a newspaper of Frankfort, Kentucky, *The Spirit of ’76*, July 14, 1826, and has been often reprinted.

[8](#) “The Coliseum,” first printed in October 1833, was revised before Poe inserted it in the eleventh scene of his play.

[9](#) See Griswold’s “Memoir,” p. xxix.

[The following footnotes appear at the bottom of page 244:]

[10](#) See my *Politian* (1923), p. 53, for fuller discussions. A supposedly unique broadside, *From the Louisville Public Advertiser. Confession of Jereboam Beauchamp. (Senator from Washington County)*, which I recently gave to the library of the University of Kentucky, was printed prior to 1825, and concerns only a political caucus, unrelated to Sharp.

[11](#) Isaac Starr Clason, actor and Byronic poet of New York, wrote a long poem on the subject in 1833, which was never printed, according to Duyckinck’s *Cyclopedia of American Literature* (1856), II, 263. The play *Conrad and Eudora ... Founded on the Murder of Sharp ...* was printed in Philadelphia by Thomas Holley Chivers in 1834, before he had any acquaintance with Poe; it bears no publisher’s name, and only one copy is known — that in the Harris Collection at Brown University, which I have read. It is as unlike Poe’s play as anything on the same subject could be. Chivers retained the scene in Kentucky; and his backwoods politicians, spouting blank verse, have the merit of unintentional laughability. Chivers rewrote the play as *Leoni, or the Orphan of Venice* in 1838, but did not print it until 1851. After he met Poe, Chivers sometimes referred to his friend as “Politian.” See *Complete Works of ... Chivers* (1957), I, 1-2, and *passim*.

[12](#) These include folksongs, plays, and novels — one is by Robert Penn Warren, *World Enough and Time* (1950). See *The Beauchamp Tragedy* (1963), edited by Jules Zanger; as well as my edition of *Politian* (1923), pp. 54f.

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Notes:

In Act I, for example, there are more than 5 lines between lines 120 and 125, and in Act II there are more than 5 lines between lines 15 and 20, even if one were to count only the lines newly assigned to characters, and with no regard to internal lines or punctuation. In spite of these problems, the line numbers have been replicated here for the sake of variant and note references.

Errata:

Scene IV., line 108, spoken by the Monk: And speak a purpose / And speaks a purpose

In reference to footnote 11, the only documented instance of Chivers calling Poe “Politian” is in a pamphlet called *Search After Truth*, written by Chivers and published in New York in 1848. The pamphlet is a metaphysical discussion of aesthetics between Chivers and Poe in the respective guises of Seer and Politian.